

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 16th – August 22nd, 2013**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - The Columbia River has both steelhead and chinook salmon spread from Buoy 10 to Bonneville Dam. Beach fishermen and boaters alike are scoring at all the popular beaches and river mouths, with the mouth of the Cowlitz being the busiest.

Walleye fishing remains the highlight on the Willamette River, although effort has dropped a bit since last week. The dip in effort is likely due to the presence of chinook in the mainstem Columbia River. Regardless, fishing should hold up for weeks to come until the river cools substantially. Bass anglers are still getting a few fish but effort is at a minimum here as well. Catch and release sturgeon remain an option for anglers wishing to get a few hours of fishing while staying close to home but few fish are available.

Water flows measure 2,100 cfs with temperatures below 55 degrees at Vida on the McKenzie River. Fly anglers throwing caddis patterns continue to enjoy steady results for trout here.

Fish counts at Willamette Falls have not improved. Since all salmon and steelhead must travel the main Willamette, there has been very little change in populations on the Santiams. Fish higher on the system for best results targeting trout and possibly steelhead.

Northwest – With the 14th annual Buoy 10 Challenge looming Friday, anticipation is running high for chinook limits to hit the deck. The fishing in Astoria has been epic with limits of chinook common, coming largely from the Washington side of the river, above the Astoria Bridge. Size 6 Fatal Flash spinners in red/white or pink/white combinations have been working during outgoing tide but fresh and frozen herring and anchovies are holding their own as well. Michael O' Leary of Portland hooked several chinook on Tuesday, trolling a whole rigged fresh herring on the Washington side in 24 to 30 foot of water. The Oregon side has yet to produce tangible results and coho have not made a strong showing either.

Although interest has largely shifted to the lower Columbia, action in the salt, just outside of the river entrance is productive for mostly coho. The bite is best right at first light and effort remains focused to the south. A calm ocean forecast should keep the ocean fishing favorably and with a southern influence, may move albacore tuna closer to shore next week.

Crabbing is good on the lower Columbia.

With the central coast halibut quota filled and coho season closed, effort out of Garibaldi is minimal. Rockfish and crabbing remain a good option however and a productive any coho season is likely starting September 1st.

The Nehalem has slowed and will likely continue to be slow until the fall run make a stronger showing in September. There will likely be sporadic flurries of activity through the month of August however.

Southwest- Tuna are far offshore out of Depoe Bay, making it a long trip to reach them. Rockfish and lingcod limits are being returned to port regularly. With the bag limit raised from 16,000 to 19,580, anglers are anxious for the non-specific coho season to open September 1-2. Fish need not be fin-clipped during this fishery.

Summer all-depth halibut is wrapped up with the quota exceeded over the first opener on August 2-3.

Friendly ocean conditions are forecast to endure through the coming weekend.

While the ocean out of Reedsport is productive, so is Winchester Bay. Herring trollers have been taking chinook regularly. Bay crabbing remains poor. Chinook are in the Umpqua mainstem but don't seem to be biting.

The ocean laid down and winds were light all last week out of Gold Beach, allowing boats to get out every day. Fishing was good for chinook and limits of rockfish and lingcod were frequent. While upriver fires are mostly under control, so much water was required to do so, lower Rogue temperatures dropped and cooled the bay. Results slowed for bay trollers. Middle Rogue fishing is poor. Below Dodge Bridge on the upper river where wild Chinook may be retained, it has been productive for drift boaters using bait.

Boats launching out of Brookings Harbor have been taking limits of ocean chinook trolling depths from 110 to 140 feet.

Eastern – With steelhead numbers improving, catches have picked up a little. Hot weather has occasionally raised water temperatures and the bite will slow when that occurs.

Crooked River flow increased slightly in the first week of August although it continues to fish well. Nymphs are most effective at this time of year.

Schools of kokanee can be seen cruising at Odell Lake but they have been off the bite. A better option might be using downriggers to troll plugs for lake trout.

East Lake is fishing well and produces large brown trout periodically.

Big Lava Lake fishing is slow.

SW Washington- The mouth of the Cowlitz continues to produce good catches of steelhead and chinook are starting to show in earnest. Chinook will soon dominate the catch and given the magnitude of the run this year, action should be excellent.

The Cowlitz River itself is producing fair catches of steelhead.

Trollers at Drano Lake are taking both steelhead and chinook with less than half of the steelhead of hatchery origin. Action for chinook will only get better as Bonneville Dam counts increase. Chinook have already been caught in the Hanford Reach.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The Buoy 10 season is full speed ahead. Effort is clearly on the increase as weekdays are quickly becoming indiscernible to weekends. The Chinook salmon catch is exploding.

As has been the case for much of the season, action above the bridge on the Washington side has been epic. Chinook limits are fairly common in what appears to be one of the best Chinook seasons on record. Of course it's too early to tell but it seems likely that this fishery will produce one of the best catches on record for the sport fleet.

The details are many and we will try and cover most of them in this section. First of all, the weak tide series we are currently experiencing clearly produces willing fish for greater amounts of time over the course of the tide. If there is one thing that I have learned, it is that when the tide is running the fastest and you're trolling speed is greater than 3.5 mph, fish are not willing to chase down baits and strike. Because of the low tide exchange, we don't find ourselves trolling at these phenomenal speeds, even during the peak of the tide. This prolongs the catchable bite time for anglers. With high tide occurring just after sunrise this week, it is shaping up to be a very productive week on the lower river.

I have been targeting most of my effort the entire day upstream of the Astoria Bridge. The humps just above the bridge have been producing consistent catches on the last part of the incoming tide. One thing that is new however is that instead of fishing all offerings on the bottom, I have been suspending baits in the mid-water and producing results on both spinners and bait. Even in water less than 25 feet, we are finding willing biters in the mid water column. Once you get into water deeper than 30 foot, be sure that at least half of your baits are suspended off of the bottom.

The first part of the outgoing tide has been one of the most consistent times of the tide to fish. Trollers are going downstream with the flow, keeping their offerings on the bottom or suspended within 10 foot of the bottom to produce catches. I have been targeting water 25 to 30 foot deep but anglers are spread from 20 to 40 feet deep and producing catches across the board. It is no mistake to fish areas where you see other boats working but don't be afraid to go into water where nobody else is as it too will likely produce fish if it is deeper than 20 feet. You will definitely see the highest concentration of boats above the bridge but with that comes a lot of boat wakes. It does not however seem to impede the bite.

As the tide slows, we are finding many more willing biters at the bridge versus Blind channel, which runs east to northwest above the shipwreck on the Washington side. We have had some really good action in the deep water directly upstream of the high span on the Washington side. Shortly following low slack, the bite has been even better on the first part of the incoming tide from the restrooms upstream to the shipwreck. I will drop my gear in at the 40 foot mark, trolling upstream into the 20 foot flat. We seem to draw the most bites between 34 and 24 foot of water as we are trolling upstream at speeds between 1.8 to 2.8 mph. There has also been some fish on the lower Desdemona Sands during the middle part of this incoming tide but not many people are fishing here yet.

THURSDAY UPDATE: It's becoming more popular downstream of the bridge as anglers are finding out that this weak tide series is keeping biting chinook lower in the river. The bite downstream of the church was very good today, especially on the outgoing tide in 28 to 35 feet of water. My best rod was producing consistent bites with a pink/white spinner trolled just 17 strips on the bow with a fish flash in tow. It was the shallowest running rod so fish are suspended here as well. Action was good above the bridge first thing this morning but it quickly became evident that there were a lot of fish downstream of the church on Thursday. We had our best day for coho yet, taking 3 nice hatchery fish and losing at least one other that we saw. They are starting to put on some pounds.

Many anglers are questioning what is the better offering to use; bait or spinners. Here are some observations I can offer you and you can make your own decision. Spinners will get fewer bites but will catch larger fish. The strike to land ratio has been better for me using bait. Finally, there does seem to be periods of the tide where baits will clearly out-produce spinners. For me, that portion of the tide seems to be the second half of outgoing and most of the incoming.

As far as spinner colors go, red and white combinations seem to still be producing the most consistently. Pink and orange with white also remain consistent producers. Not many people are using chartreuse, a well-known Chinook salmon favorite but given enough time they will surely produce results.

As far as ocean fishing goes, it remains hit or miss out there. With effort largely focused on the river fishery, not many people are pursuing coho on the open ocean. Those that are, are reporting good success for mostly coho. One charter boat operator reported good numbers of coho just outside of the river entrance and the fish are putting on some pounds. Coho should be staging closer to the river mouth where they are expected to make a strong entrance in the next few weeks for lower river anglers. Charter boat operators are adamant about being on the ocean near first light as fish are most aggressive then. An early morning departure can mean an early morning limit. There still aren't many people targeting salmon to the north but why would you when there are so many chinook in the river?

Still not many crabbers working the lower Columbia but the action is good. Fresh salmon carcasses are available but with the salmon in the river and an easy target, not many are going offshore to pursue tuna. Maybe tuna carcasses will become more abundant with the upcoming weather forecast.

Tuna remain 35 to 45 miles offshore and interest is waning while the salmon run is hitting its stride.

Upstream, a strong push of summer steelhead have made a showing, erasing concerns (at least mine) of a bust run this season. The run numbers have finally surpassed last year at Bonneville Dam with some impressive peak passage days last week. Action has been fair given the warmer water conditions but anglers fishing near the river mouths have been producing the best results (predictably).

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos reports, "The Columbia River has both steelhead and Chinook salmon spread from Buoy 10 to Bonneville Dam. Beach fishermen and boaters alike are scoring at all the popular beaches and river mouths, with the mouth of the Cowlitz being the busiest. Salmon fishermen are scoring with Simon and Alvin wobblers in the 30-50 foot water. Steelhead are getting caught in shallower water with small flatfish and Brads wigglers. Coon shrimp are popular too and also will fool a salmon every now and then. Bank fishermen use small sized spin-n-gloves, generally fished in tandem and will sometimes add a coon shrimp."

The Guide's Forecast – It's hard to believe that the Buoy 10 fishery can get more productive. This week however, it actually could. Anglers need to keep in mind however that there will be a lot of anglers around, making for some pretty stiff competition. Fortunately, there will be a lot of opportunity as well and the tides are conducive to a strong early morning bite.

By the weekend, we'll be pretty close to a full-blown morning incoming tide and anglers can soon do a later start to maximize the effort. As the tide strength grows over the weekend, the window of willing biters will wane, making it ever-more important to maximize the time period when the flows slow down. Weak daytime tides will also determine how high into the estuary fish will flush this weekend. With a weaker exchange, anglers will want to focus more of their efforts downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge instead of where we have been, upstream of the bridge. As a general rule, the stronger the tide, the further upstream you should fish with the cut-off being the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Run timing alone will be our best ally, not to mention the booming return we are witnessing. I'll go out on a limb now and say that the departments have finally under-predicted a return for a change. The returns at Bonneville are already double the 10-year average. It's clearly a whopper run.

The Oregon side is beginning to produce some results on the green line. Although effort remains largely focused on the Washington side (and rightfully so), boaters fishing the green line are starting to produce fair catches for the effort that they are putting in. Young's Bay has slowed as well as the effort but it's time to start paying closer attention to the Oregon side of the river.

Start your morning effort low in the estuary, say Buoy 20 or 14 and work your way upstream on the incoming tide. With the weaker incoming tide (+6.4 foot flood on Saturday), you may not want to invest too much time above the Astoria Bridge but do get close to the bridge by high slack. Also, if you end up fishing through the outgoing tide, start high at the first part of the outgoing and stay low towards the end of it.

As far as gear, spinners and bait seem to be working nearly the same. I have recently found that the chinook seem to be favoring bait more towards the end of outgoing and the first part of incoming tide. Some guides are using spinners only however and scoring limits on most days, and early at that. It's not a bad idea to have different rods fishing different gear but you'd be a fool not to prepare for using both. We've mentioned the best colors in the report section but if the sun shines, use the metallic colors such as silver, nickel, brass, gold and copper. It would be wise to incorporate some red, pink or orange in some of the blades as well.

If you're going to fish the ocean, you should still plan on heading south and targeting coho. Chinook are so plentiful in the river that very few folks are pursuing them in the ocean. Fresh anchovies or herring will take fish; both seem to be working equally well. Call (503) 741-1407 (World Class Sportfishing) for all your bait or spinner needs.

If you're going to crab in the river, be prepared to lose gear as anglers will be running all over the estuary in search of salmon. You may very well be in the way as well as trollers will want to be working over much of the water that is also productive for fishing. There are soft shells in the mix but more so in the ocean.

Offshore fishing looks pretty favorable (at least through Saturday) and maybe with the southerly influence, tuna will come closer to shore. Here is the offshore forecast:

FRI

S WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT.
SW SWELL 4 FT AT 8 SECONDS. PATCHY MORNING FOG.

FRI NIGHT

SW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. SW SWELL 3 FT
AT 7 SECONDS. AREAS OF DRIZZLE AND PATCHY FOG AFTER MIDNIGHT.

SAT

SW WIND 5 KT...VEERING TO W IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES
1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT AT 11 SECONDS. PATCHY DRIZZLE.

SAT NIGHT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 3 FT
AT 10 SECONDS.

SUN

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO NW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND
WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 10 SECONDS. PATCHY FOG.

SUN NIGHT

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING N 5 TO 10 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT AT 10 SECONDS.

MON

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

TUE

NW WIND 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

Summer steelhead action, already on its way out, should drop off even more this week. Action could pick up upstream of Bonneville however and especially on the lower Deschutes River if water temperatures remain cool.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos reports, "Walleye fishing remains the highlight of the report on the Willamette River, although effort has dropped a bit since last week. The dip in effort is likely due to the presence of Chinook in the mainstem Columbia River. Regardless, fishing should hold up for weeks to come until the river cools substantially. Bass anglers are still getting a few fish but effort is at a minimum here as well. Catch and release sturgeon remains an option, but few fish are available."

McKenzie River flows remain unchanged from earlier this week, with the Vida gauge indicating 2,100 cfs. River temperatures are in the mid-50s.

North and South Santiam rivers are stable and at fishable levels. Passage at Willamette Falls had dwindled to single digit but the data has yet to be updated past August 2nd.

The Guide's Forecast – The best bet on the McKenzie will be the upper river. Stick with caddis patterns and fish what you see. Floating a spent caddis pattern into a swirling back eddy is as effective here as it is on the Deschutes.

Fishing is expected to remain fairly slow on the North and South Santiam. Bobber and jig are the most popular approach to steelhead and have been effective here and there this week.

Expect fishing on the Willamette River to remain steady as she goes for walleye and smallmouth bass. As long as there isn't a drastic change in the weather, the river should produce as well as it has been.

On the Columbia River, expect the Chinook bite to improve all the way to Bonneville Dam. Summer steelhead are still in the mix and a steady flow of fish should continue for the next week or two.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The Clackamas River is still over-run with rafters and tubers trying to beat the heat. Clackamas county will decide this week if they will start spot checking for alcoholic beverages at county parks along the river.

Cooler weather will lighten the crowd a bit, but steelhead fishing will likely remain tough. Fishermen looking for steelhead are urged to fish from Barton Park upstream to Rivermill Dam and get there early or fish the last two hours before dark.

On the Sandy River, anglers are getting the occasional summer steelhead but effort has been on the low side. Most days, there has been a small rough crowd at the mouth of the Salmon River, using questionable techniques and looking for old springers. This late in the game, these fish are best left to do their thing.

The Guide's Forecast – This time of year, the Clackamas River is the domain of beer drinking, litter bug rafters, tubers and swimmers. Anglers take note.

The Sandy River isn't much better. Expect the fishing for summer steelhead to be slow at best. Some silvers could show up by mid-September.

North Coast Fishing Report – With Nehalem action slowing, anglers are looking north for great salmon action on the lower Columbia. Those that are sticking it out, are finding a rare chinook at the Nehalem entrance but interest is still running high after a productive early season just a short few weeks ago. It's likely we've seen the best of the summer run on the Nehalem. Anglers are now waiting for fall run fish to make a strong showing.

With south of Falcon coho season closed, the halibut quota eaten up and rockfish starting to go through the summer doldrums, anglers remain focused on tuna when the weather permits. Tuna fishing remains good although not every boat puts the hurt on them. It seems iron and live bait is producing the best but live bait can still be hard to come by. Call ahead to check availability. Fish are still 35 to 40 miles out.

Offshore, bottomfish and soft-shelled crab remain the best option (if you can call it that) but soon, nearshore chinook should soon become available; these are ones that are headed south to other estuaries on the central coast.

Crabbing in the estuaries is fair to good on this soft tide series. Fresh salmon carcasses should be easy to come by and fresh bait will always produce better than most other bait. Tuna carcasses are even better.

Summer steelheaders on the Wilson are largely leaving disappointed. With low flows and a sub-par return, anglers haven't been all that motivated. The Nestucca and Three Rivers are also challenging. Cloudy skies are likely to help but you will still be challenged.

The Guide's Forecast – Don't count on much to pursue on the north coast. The Nehalem system is the best bet but fish are making their way rapidly upstream to spawn in the Vernonia stretch. Bobber fishers and trollers working the Nehalem area are finding a few fish but many of the biters were culled out of the population when the fishery at the mouth was going gangbusters. After the weekend, the tide series will steepen once again and fresh fish should make their way into the Wheeler and Nehalem reaches once again. With all the effort focused on the Columbia, crowds should subdue.

The offshore forecast should allow for more tuna effort. Trolling is still effective but as the season progresses, jigs and live bait take front and center; it's getting to be about that time. Some good info from Garibaldi can be found here: <http://www.ifish.net/board/showthread.php?t=468713>.

Here is the latest:

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N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO NW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND
WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 10 SECONDS. PATCHY FOG.

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NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING N 5 TO 10 KT AFTER
MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT AT 10 SECONDS.

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TUE

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Crabbing may become more challenging as the tide swing increases. The ocean should remain productive but you will encounter a substantial number of soft-shelled crab. Bottomfishing should remain fair but schools are getting worked over.

Freshwater anglers don't have much to work with but steelhead remain an option, albeit not a great one. For those "old-timers" that like a troll fishery, drag Ford Fender trolls with a worm behind for sea-run cutthroat trout in most tidewater sections on north coast rivers. This can be a fun time of year to catch them.

Central & South Coast Reports – Ocean forecasts have held up this week, indicating low swells at long intervals accompanied by tolerable breezes through the weekend.

Tuna are 30 miles out and it has been scratch fishing most days with boats returning to central Oregon ports with anywhere from four or five albacore to 20, although the latter would be a number that would more than satisfy most tuna hunters. Fish are averaging 20 to 22 pounds. A number of Bluefin have been landed this year.

Offshore bottomfishing for rockfish and lingcod fishing as well as trolling for Chinook has been good out of Depoe Bay this week. Combo trips are producing limits of all.

Siletz steelheading is slow. Coyote Rock posted a photo of one Chinook taken by a boat earlier this week although a boat fisher shared photos of several he landed on Monday and Tuesday this week.

While sea-run cutthroat trout are generally considered to be anadromous fish (migrating out to the ocean to return seasonally), there are resident cutties available in coastal rivers 'most anytime. This is true on the Alsea, although a few fresh fish have been hooked lately so from here forward into the fall months, expect results to improve.

Boats launching out of Winchester Bay for ocean Chinook have been enjoying fair, steady catches. Inside Winchester Bay is slow for crabbing. In the warm waters of the Umpqua mainstem, smallmouth bass are active and being hooked in good number. A few steelhead are being taken on the North Umpqua with the window of opportunity opening at first light. Chinook may not be kept here. On the South Umpqua, trout and smallies are the only options as no spring or fall Chinook may be kept here.

Charleston has been one of the most productive ports on the coast for bottomfish and is popular with tuna fishers as well. Trollers dragging herring at the Coos Bay jaws have hooked a few Chinook recently but it's too early in the season to expect any fish to be in the bay. Crabbing remains slow. Chinook are being taken by ocean trollers not far outside the bay entrance. Crabbing is somewhat better than in the bay but that situation holds true coast-wide.

Rogue Bay remains mid-lull following the temperature drop on the river resulting from firefighting efforts and drawing fall Chinook upstream. Waters of the lower Rogue had also been rising slightly although that trend reversed mid-week. Summer steelheading is reported as fair to good on the lower Rogue with most fish getting hooked on spinners. Rogue flows at Grants Pass increased from 1,300cfs to 1,700 cfs but have since stabilized. A few summer steelhead and Chinook are being taken by anglers in this stretch as they pass through. Summer steelheading is good on the upper Rogue. At this time of year, it's still fairly common to hook up with a springer in this section of the river, often showing plenty of color. Despite a dusky exterior, these fish may well cut red. The area is clear of wildfire smoke.

Chinook catches slowed a little this week out of the Port of Brookings but anglers are advised not to get discouraged. Persistence will pay off. Try trolling in water 130 to 150 deep at 60 to 120 feet.

Halibut is open south of Humbug Mountain and has been fair to good. Halibut are being taken with some regularity right off the Thomas Creek Bridge at Brookings Harbor. A 60-pounder landed from there was weighed at the local outdoor store on August 8th. Chetco flows have dropped below 100 cfs at Brookings. While the lower river remains open for trout, it is closed to all species starting a River Mile 2.2.

Diamond Lake trout fishing is spotty. Anglers may expect two or three fish 12 to 14 inches, occasionally larger. The algae problem persists and is still reported as non-toxic but was recently reported as stinky.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Despite lower run numbers this year, Deschutes steelheading has been fair and even good for some. Passage at the dams indicate new fish are entering. One angler took three in a days' fishing earlier this week. Trout fishing is pretty good with spent caddis patterns getting attention in the eddies. Be prepared to see lots of people from the rafting and inflatable plastics crowd starting at mid-day, however.

Paulina Lake has been slow for trollers as well as anglers fishing jigs.

A better alternative might be East Lake which offers more fish and they are larger, including those big brown trout for which it is best known. East Lake is also producing.

Green Peter is producing well for trollers using downriggers at 50 to 70 foot depths. An effective combination has been a flasher or dodger trailing a scented hoochie in pink, orange or yellow. Limits are common for trollers who find schools of fish.

Odell is fishing well for kokanee on downriggers in the 50-foot range. Large lake trout are being caught occasionally.

Wickiup is at very low level with fishing spotty. Those who have taken a number of kokanee say they're showing a great deal of color with some losing scales.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2013

North Puget Sound

(Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties)

Anglers are reeling in chinook, pinks, and coho in North Puget Sound, where two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1 and crabbing is still an option.

"We are expecting more than 6 million pinks to make their way through Puget Sound into area rivers this year," says Ryan Lothrop, Puget Sound recreational salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Anglers across the state have been catching these salmon, catch rates are improving steadily, and we expect the run to continue to build as pink salmon enter rivers like the Skagit, Green, and Snohomish by mid-to-late August."

The **Puget Sound crab fishery** is also under way in most marine areas. The exception is the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) of Marine Area 7, which opens for crab Aug. 15. All marine areas of Puget Sound will be open for crabbing Thursday through Monday of each week only. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are closed and all crab gear must be removed from the water.

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

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

Meanwhile, for those more interested in river fishing, freshwater anglers are gearing up for **salmon** openers on select rivers.

Those rivers include the following:

- **Skagit River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 from the mouth of the river to the mouth of Gilligan Creek. The Skagit opens from the mouth of Gilligan Creek to the Dalles Bridge at Concrete for salmon fishing Aug. 16. Anglers fishing those

- sections have a four-salmon daily limit, and no more than two can be wild coho. All chinook and chum must be released.
- **Snohomish River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 from the mouth of the river to the highway 9 bridge and on Aug. 16 from highway 9 bridge upstream to the confluence of the Skykomish and Snoqualmie rivers. There is a three-salmon daily limit, plus one additional pink salmon. Chinook and chum must be released.
 - **Green River:** Salmon fishing opens Aug. 23 from the 1st Ave. South Bridge to Hwy. 99/Tukwila Intl. Blvd. Anglers fishing the Green have a daily limit of six salmon; up to three adult coho and chum (combined) may be retained. Chinook must be released.

Check the [Fish Washington pamphlet](#) for additional details on regulations for these rivers.

On North Puget Sound, anglers can fish for chinook salmon in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. They must, however, release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers should note that those fishing Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet) are allowed to keep only one hatchery chinook as part of their daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon. For more information, see this [recent announcement](#) and the [Fish Washington rules pamphlet](#).

Those fishing Marine Area 10 can keep up to two hatchery chinook – marked with a clipped adipose fin – as part of a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Wild chinook must be released. Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 also must release chum salmon.

Additional rules apply to Elliot Bay and Sinclair Inlet in Marine Area 10. Anglers are advised to check the [fishing pamphlet](#) starting on page 116 for maps of these regions and for additional details on regulations.

August brings other opportunities in the region to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon. Anglers fishing these areas will have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but must release chinook. Within area 8-2, Tulalip Bay at the terminal is open Friday through noon on Mondays and allows the use of two poles for those with a two-pole endorsement.

Check the [Fish Washington rules pamphlet](#) for additional details on current salmon fishing opportunities.

Though many anglers focus on burgeoning opportunities for salmon in mid-to-late summer, August is also a great time to pursue **yellow perch, bass, bluegill** and **catfish** in lowland lakes.

“With warmer water temperatures, anglers should seek deepwater structure such as ledges and weed lines to find warmwater species during the heat of the day,” says Danny Garrett, WDFW lead warmwater fisheries biologist. “In clearer lakes, such as Lake Washington, start your search for perch and bass in 15 to 20 feet of water. In shallower lakes with stained water, such as Lake Cassidy, look for fish along the weed edge in five to 10 feet of water.”

Yellow perch is a species that will bite throughout the day, so perch fishing is a great way to introduce kids to the sport.

Though many **trout** fisheries have slowed with rising water temperatures, anglers in pursuit of trout or **kokanee** are still finding bountiful harvests in deeper Puget Sound lowland waters.

"Try trolling for these fishes below the thermocline with common gear such as wedding rings, woolly buggers, hoochies, and even bare hooks baited with shoepeg corn behind a dodger-- usually 12 to 30 inches--at slow speeds," says WDFW trout biologist, Justin Spinelli. "Remember that kokanee, in particular, migrate vertically in the water column as they pursue invertebrates so try various depths until you find the schools."

Trout and kokanee fisheries where success has been reported recently include Lake Stevens (Snohomish County), Lake Meridian (King County), Angle Lake (King County), and American Lake (Pierce County). Anglers can identify other potential fisheries by consulting the [Statewide Hatchery Trout and Kokanee Stocking Plan](#).

To find out more about fishing for these and other species in Washington, visit the [Fish Washington website](#).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

(Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, Thurston and Pacific counties)

The surge of summer salmon is upon us, and the smell of smoking fish is already wafting through campgrounds and neighborhoods across the region.

Along with strong numbers of **chinook** and **coho salmon** in the ocean and in protected waters, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) fisheries managers estimate 6.2 million **pink salmon** are flooding into the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound on their biannual, odd-numbered-years-only spawning run. Many of those scrappy pinks are headed for South Sound rivers.

Doug Milward, WDFW's ocean salmon manager, says Marine Areas 1-4 were very kind to salmon anglers in July. He expects the fishing to be good and perhaps even better in August. Chinook fishing has been outstanding so far this year, according to Milward.

In Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) and Marine Area 2 (Westport), anglers are allowed two adult salmon, one of which may be a chinook, but are required to release all wild coho. Almost the same daily bag limit applies in Marine Area 3 (La Push) and Marine Area 4 (Neah Bay), except anglers are allowed up to two adult chinook.

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca (marine areas 5 and 6), chinook retention opportunities come to a close on Aug. 15, but hatchery coho and pink salmon options continue into fall. Prior to Aug. 15, anglers may retain two adult salmon, two of which may be chinook, plus two pink salmon. Wild coho, chinook, and chum salmon are all subject to release during summer in marine areas 5 and 6.

The South Sound (marine areas 11-13) is host to many salmon opportunities this August, but they vary within the areas. Check your fishing regulations carefully, and go get 'em! Opportunities abound for catching and keeping coho, chinook, and pink salmon.

August 2013 is shaping up to be an epic month for the region's salmon anglers, but the opportunities aren't limited to salmon. Marine Area 1 anglers have not yet exhausted their **halibut** quota, which means it's not too late to book a charter or plan a trip to the Port of Ilwaco to fill your freezer with one of the Pacific's most prized fish.

All of Washington's major ocean ports offer good bottomfishing for **rockfish** and **lingcod**, and August is a great and usually gentle time to take to the ocean in search of these firm, white-fleshed fish.

Similarly, **albacore tuna** fishing begins to peak in August, when these sub-tropical, pelagic fish ride warm currents that have flowed delightfully close to shore in recent years. When tuna are only 25 to 50 miles offshore, charter and private boat operators lick their chops. Shorter runs to the tuna grounds mean less fuel burned and more time fighting these 50-mile-per-hour saltwater rockets.

A variety of river salmon fisheries materialize in August, including the South Sound's pink salmon rivers: the Puyallup and Nisqually. All three streams will receive large returns and will draw large crowds of anglers.

Discussions between WDFW and the Skokomish and Puyallup tribes has resulted in a plan that opens prime areas on both rivers for tribal members and the general public. Before grabbing your salmon rods, check out the news releases describing newly forged regulations for both the [Skokomish](#) and [Puyallup](#).

The region's best hatchery summer **steelhead** streams are the Humptulips and Wynoochee rivers, but summer fishing in these streams is often weather- and temperature-dependent and can be feast or famine. Still, anglers shouldn't overlook these beautiful walk-and-wade rivers. The best strategy for success is to fish high in the river system in areas that are open to fishing. Search for groups of steelhead seeking thermal refuges near springs.

For details on river fishing for salmon and steelhead, including catch and gear limitations, open waters, and allowable fishing days, always check the Washington [sport fishing rules](#) pamphlet before hitting the water.

Trout fishing remains strong in the region's deeper, cooler lakes, despite soaring summer temperatures that make trout lethargic. Lethargy or not, they still have to eat.

Trout in August feed almost exclusively early in the morning, in the evenings, and under cover of darkness. Fish don't like to move much for their meals. As such, the region's still fishers are outperforming trollers. Those still fishing baits like shrimp, nightcrawlers, salmon eggs, and dough baits are doing well, especially near springs that discharge cold water.

North of Olympia, Saint Clair Lake has been especially good to trout anglers this summer, which should continue through August. American, Clear, and Ward lakes also produce good trout fishing during August due to their depth and good water quality.

Region 6 offers some of the Washington's finest **kokanee** fishing, and it should continue to be good in August. Larry Phillips, WDFW district fish biologist, says fishing has been excellent this summer at Summit Lake, where anglers have been catching kokanee to 13 inches. Clear and Ward lakes have been good, too, for fish from 10 to 12 inches.

The popular kokanee fishery at American Lake won't produce many limits this summer, says Phillips, but the fish are large and in excellent condition. American's kokanee are averaging 14-16 inches this year, and Phillips recently received a picture of a 21.5-inch koke from the popular fishery south of Tacoma.

Bruce Bolding, WDFW's Warmwater Fish Program manager, says Region 6 is home to some very good and overlooked bass, panfish, and channel catfish angling.

"We stocked Saint Clair Lake and Lawrence Lake with **channel catfish** for the first time in the fall of 2011, but the fish should be big enough this summer to catch and fillet and have a great meal," said Bolding. "Chambers Lake was also stocked in 2011 but had been previously stocked in the 1990's, so there could be a few really big fish left. Harts Lake in Pierce County was not stocked in 2011, but still has fish from 2005."

Bolding cites eastern Pierce County's Kapowsin, Tanwax, Ohop, and Rapjon lakes as being good for panfish — especially **perch and crappie**. He adds Thurston County's Summit, Long, and Pattison lakes to the list.

For a mix of **largemouth and smallmouth bass**, he advocates the same lakes as above, as well as Kitsap County's Long and Kitsap lakes and Thurston County's Black and Hicks lakes. Munn Lake is a Thurston County selective fishery requiring catch and release and is good for bass and **bluegill**.

Southwest Washington

(Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Skamania and Wahkiakum counties)

This year's **fall chinook** fishery opens Aug. 1 on the Columbia River, where a strong run of upriver brights is expected to exceed both the 10-year average and last year's return. Of the 678,000 "falls" included in the pre-season forecast, about 434,000 are projected to be upriver brights, which are expected to return in the largest numbers since record keeping began in 1964.

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

"We're definitely expecting a big angler turnout for these fisheries," Hymer said. "The fall chinook should pick up quickly through the month of August, and the upriver brights tend to keep biting as they move upriver."

Although the opener for the fall chinook will extend upriver as far as Priest Rapids Dam, most of the action during the first few weeks focuses on the popular **Buoy 10 fishery** in the lower 16 miles of the river. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch nearly 20,000 chinook salmon in those waters by the end of the day Sept. 1, after which the retention fishery for chinook in the Buoy 10 area will close for the remainder of September. Anglers are also expected to catch 13,000 coho in that area by the time that fishery closes at the end of the year.

The daily limit for the Buoy 10 fishery is two salmon, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each. But through Sept. 1, only one of those salmon may be a chinook (marked or unmarked). For steelhead and coho, only fish marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained.

Barbless hooks are required when fishing for salmon and steelhead on the mainstem Columbia River and many of its tributaries.

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

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

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

Hatchery coho are expected to make a stronger showing this year, helping to round out anglers' daily limits. WDFW currently expects about 434,000 coho to return this year – three times more than last year's return and similar to the recent 10-year average. Hymer said coho salmon usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and later on bait and lures in the tributaries.

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are also available for harvest, said Hymer, noting that the smaller "A-run" fish should keep biting through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead – many weighing in the teens – will start arriving to pick up the slack. Together, returns of both runs are expected to total 322,000 fish, on par with the recent 10-year average .

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

The White Salmon River has historically been another productive dip-in fishery, but how the fish will respond after Condit Dam was breached in late 2011 remains to be seen.

Like last year, anglers will be allowed to retain up to six adult hatchery coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal.

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

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

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing can be good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing is also heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam. Anglers can also retain sturgeon measuring 43 to 54 inches in The Dalles Pool until the guideline has been reached.

For **trout**, the high lakes in the Cascades offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Wilderness areas around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens are now accessible with the snowmelt.

A couple of drive-up lakes to check out are Council and Takhlakh Lake on the northwest side of Mt. Adams. Council was stocked July 8 with 3,000 rainbow catchable trout weighing half-a-pound each. Takhlakh was planted on June 24 with 3,000 catchables, along with 150 rainbows weighing almost 3.5 pounds each.

Eastern Washington

(Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman counties)

Fishing in August can sometimes be slow, due to higher daytime water and air temperatures. But anglers fishing early in the morning, late in the evening, or on days with lots of cloud cover can have success this time of year.

Randy Osborne, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) central district fish biologist in Spokane, says mixed species waters are a good bet. Anglers can find **yellow perch**, **largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie**, along with some trout, at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs Lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman, Silver, and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake (or Lake Spokane).

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

Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist in Colville, said **kokanee** fishing should be productive in August at Loon Lake in southern Stevens County. "Most anglers there are fishing during the evening with glow hooks and other gear," he said. "But trolling during the day should also be good."

Baker notes that kokanee can also be had in a few other northeast district waters including Bead, Sullivan, and Davis lakes in Pend Oreille County and Pierre and Deep lakes in Stevens County. Deep Lake should produce 12- inch-plus kokanee.

"I've also heard anglers are catching some kokanee in the lower portion of Lake Roosevelt," Baker said. "They're also doing well on rainbows in the reservoir. **Walleye** fishing at Roosevelt has been fair, with somewhat lower success rates for most anglers compared to the last couple of years."

Baker suggests fishing for trout (rainbow, cutthroat, brook and tiger) in higher elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property throughout August. Davis, Ellen, Empire, and Ferry lakes are good bets in Ferry County. In Stevens County, Black, Little Twin, and Summit lakes should be good producers. In Pend Oreille County, anglers should find good fishing at Carl's, Frater, Halfmoon, Mystic, North and South Skookum, Petit, and Yokum lakes.

Glen Mendel, WDFW southeast district fish biologist in Dayton, reminds anglers that **steelhead** fishing on the Snake River is open for retention of hatchery-marked fish in August this year. Mendel notes that steelhead numbers are rapidly increasing at the Columbia and Snake River dams.

"The return of **fall chinook salmon** to the Snake is expected to be a 30 to 40 year record number this year and also very good in the mid-Columbia River region overall," Mendel said. "We are considering an opening, so anglers should watch for an announcement on our website."

WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman said the Tucannon River impoundments on the area are a bit "warm and green." Some folks are still fishing them, she says, but many more are fishing the river during warmer weather.

Mendel reminds river anglers and other recreationists not to build rock or log dams across rivers and streams because it prevents bull trout and other species from moving upstream and downstream. "Every year we have new rock dams in August and early September that block bull trout migration and sometimes trap and kill them," Mendel said. "Bull trout and spring chinook are very vulnerable at this time of year in low water, sometimes in marginal water temperatures. Neither can be legally harvested or harassed."

Northcentral Washington

(Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties)

The Wenatchee River **hatchery summer chinook salmon** fishery opens Aug. 1 from the mouth to 400 feet below Dryden Dam. Travis Maitland, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Chelan district fish biologist, notes that on Sept. 1 the fishery extends to the Icicle River Road Bridge (Hwy. 2 at Leavenworth) and runs through Sept. 30. See all the details for this fishery in the [rules pamphlet](#).

Maitland reports another Lake Wenatchee **sockeye salmon** fishery is being considered. Anglers should watch WDFW's website for an official [emergency rule change](#).

Meanwhile, sockeye salmon fishing has picked up considerably in the Columbia River near Brewster, said Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist in Twisp. Effort has been good with catch rates of one to two fish per angler. Chinook salmon are also being caught, but in much smaller numbers.

Jateff also notes the section of the Columbia River from Wells Dam upstream to the Hwy. 173 Bridge in Brewster has been open to salmon fishing since July 16. Anglers are required to release any sockeye or **chinook** with a colored anchor (floy) tag located just below the dorsal fin. "Most of the sockeye are running smaller this year, in the 1- to 3-pound range with some larger adults up to 5 pounds," Jateff said. "The chinook are averaging 10 to 15 pounds."

Jateff said fishing in the Methow River is good with flows leveling out due to earlier than normal snow melt. Selective gear rules are in effect and no bait is allowed. The open area of the Methow extends from the Lower Burma Road Bridge (below the town of Methow) upstream to the Weeman Bridge (eight miles north of Winthrop). "With warmer water conditions expected during the month of August, anglers should be very careful in playing and releasing fish during that time," Jateff said. "It's best to play the fish as quickly as possible and to not remove it from the water."

Jateff notes there are two sections of the Twisp and Chewuch rivers that are open to catch-and-release trout fishing. The Twisp is open from the mouth upstream to War Creek, and the Chewuch is open from the mouth upstream to Eight Mile Creek. Anglers should check the current sportfishing rules pamphlet as all of these open areas have varying closure dates. Anglers can expect resident **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** in the 8- to 16-inch range, along with **whitefish** up to 18 inches.

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

Southcentral Washington

(Benton, Franklin, Kittitas and Yakima counties)

Columbia and Snake River **walleye** fishing has been excellent this summer and is expected to remain strong throughout August. Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), said the best catches have come from Lake Umatilla -- the 67 miles of the Columbia River between John Day and McNary Dams. Angling upstream of McNary for the toothy fish has also been good.

Walleye are also numerous and active during August on the Hanford Reach of the Columbia and on the lower portions of the Snake River, especially below Ice Harbor Dam. Most anglers use diving plugs, jigs, blade baits, or 'crawler harnesses to catch them.

Hoffarth reminds anglers that there is no minimum size limit and no limit on the number of walleye you can keep upstream of the Washington-Oregon border (17 miles upstream of McNary Dam). Below the state line (downstream), there is a daily limit of 10 fish, only five of which can measure over 18 inches and only one of which can be over 24 inches.

Rather fish for **smallmouth bass**? During August they swim deep, but the fishing can be good for those in-the-know. Trolling with deep-diving plugs and fine-diameter braided lines 150 to 200 feet behind the boat allows anglers to get their plugs down to the fish. Smallmouth usually run even deeper than walleye during the burning heat and gentle flows of summer.

Mid-river humps and bars from 30-45 feet in depth tend to attract large concentrations of mature smallmouth during August. Along with trolling these areas, vertical jigging with blade baits and soft-plastic jigs is also very effective. As with walleye, Hoffarth says there is no limit on the number or the size of smallmouth bass anglers can keep in the Columbia River or its tributaries above the Washington-Oregon state line. Below the state line, anglers can keep a daily limit of five smallmouth bass, only three of which can exceed 15 inches.

Anglers tend to catch both species at the same time, as well as occasional chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead. To retain salmon and adipose-fin-clipped steelhead caught accidentally while fishing for walleye or smallmouth, anglers must use barbless hooks. Starting Aug. 1, both fall chinook and coho with intact adipose fins may be retained.

Hoffarth reports **sturgeon** are still biting on the Columbia and Snake Rivers, but July 31 was the last day for retention fishing on Lake Wallula and the Snake River below Ice Harbor Dam. Lake Umatilla switched to catch-and-release-only on June 29. Sturgeon sanctuaries (located below many of the dams) remain off-limits to anglers until Aug. 1 when a catch-and-release season opens.

Fishery managers are projecting a strong run of 339,200 summer-run **steelhead** over Bonneville Dam this year, many bound for the Snake River and the mid to upper Columbia River. The Snake and areas of the Columbia opened for hatchery steelhead fishing June 16 this year, including the stretch from Bonneville to the Highway 395 bridge in Kennewick.

WDFW will open the area of the Columbia River from the Highway 395 bridge to the old Hanford town site Oct. 1, earlier if the run comes in stronger or earlier than expected. Look for announcements on the [WDFW website](#).

Steelhead fishing in southcentral Washington can be tough during summer due to sunny conditions and high water temperatures, even when large numbers of fish are moving upriver. Fishing very early in the morning or from dusk into darkness increases the odds of hooking up with these temperature-sensitive fish.

Night fishing with black or lighted plugs can be very productive and is both legal and popular above McNary Dam on Oregon's and Washington's halves of the river. A night closure is in effect below McNary on Oregon's half of the river, so anglers must remain on Washington's side of the river channel to stay legal.

Anglers can also look forward to great fishing for **fall chinook salmon** in the weeks ahead. A strong run of 677,900 is expected to return to the Columbia this year, including 432,500 "upriver brights" expected to cross McNary Dam – many headed for the Hanford Reach. Chinook should start biting at the end of August with the fishing improving and peaking in late September and early October.

Further north in Region 3, spring chinook fishing closed July 15 on the Upper Yakima River between Union Gap and Roza Dam after a strong season, said Eric Anderson, a WDFW fish biologist in Yakima.

"Catch rates for springers were highest during June and tapered off during early July," says Anderson. "Now anglers are looking ahead to the fishery for fall chinook in the Columbia River and lower Yakima."

Salmon fishing will be allowed from Sept. 1 to Oct. 22 for fall chinook in the lower Yakima in an area stretching from Prosser Dam to the river's mouth at the Highway 240 bridge in Richland. Catch rates can soar once the Yakima's waters cool enough to draw fish out of the colder water of the Columbia River, but that often doesn't occur until late September or early October. Nonetheless, throughout August, a combination of upper-Columbia summer chinook and early arriving fall chinook bound for the Hanford Reach and the Yakima River will hold at the Yakima's mouth near Bateman Island in Tri-Cities. This fishery has been popular in recent years.

Water levels have now dropped in streams flowing into the upper Yakima and Naches rivers and their tributaries, said Anderson, providing excellent fishing conditions for wild **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout**. Anglers should be sure to check the regulations for those streams and to release all salmon, bull trout, and steelhead.

In the Cascade Mountains, ice has now melted from alpine lakes, and anglers looking to beat the heat are headed for the high country. WDFW stocks many hike-in lakes around White Pass, Chinook Pass, and Snoqualmie Pass with **rainbow and cutthroat trout**; others have naturally reproducing **eastern brook trout** populations.

For more information on fishing the high lakes in south-central Washington, Anderson suggested anglers check out the [high lakes stocking list](#) for the past several years to get ideas on where to go. Hikers and anglers can check trail conditions with U.S. Forest Service offices in Naches and Cle Elum before heading out.

Anderson adds that anglers seeking boating or drive-up shore fishing opportunities will find good fishing is still available in August for planted trout at Clear and Dog Lakes in the White Pass area.

Also near White Pass, Rimrock Lake is kicking out limits of 16 **kokanee** averaging almost 10 inches. The fish are deep, but they can be found all over the lake. Very slow trolling with pop gear (gang trolls) or dodgers followed by a wedding ring spinner baited with maggots or tuna-scented shoe-peg corn is very effective. Kokanee are also available in August at Kachess, Keechelus & Cle Elum Lakes off Interstate 90, and fishing is good for both kokanee and cutthroat at Bumping Lake off Highway 410.

The daily combined trout and kokanee limit has been reduced to five fish at Cle Elum Lake in an effort to protect rebounding stocks of sockeye salmon. Since juvenile sockeye remain in the lake for two or more years before migrating to sea and are nearly indistinguishable from kokanee, reducing the kokanee bag limit reduces impacts on sensitive sockeye smolts.

Whether in Cle Elum Lake or elsewhere in the Yakima River Basin, Anderson reminds anglers that bull trout caught inadvertently while fishing for other species must be released unharmed.

“There are very stiff penalties for catching and keeping a bull trout,” says Anderson.

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Random Links

Salmon Effort and Catch by port:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/catchindex.asp> (site down until the 19th)

Chinook release technique – Not Recommended:

<http://www.fieldandstream.com/blogs/lateral-line/2013/08/and-darwin-award-catch-release-goes?src=SOC&dom=fb>

GOOD LUCK!