

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 25th – October 31st, 2013**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - On the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, anglers continue to catch fall chinook although the bite is becoming sporadic and many of the fish are getting quite dark. A large portion of the chinook present will spawn right below the dam. Anglers should take note and consider letting these fish spawn in peace. Saturday's sturgeon opener on the Willamette River below Willamette Falls proved to be quite productive for many anglers and the turn-out was also surprising. Many reports came in of boats limiting with three, four or five keepers from Oregon City, Milwaukie, the Portland Harbor and Multnomah Channel indicating the river has plenty of fish in it for catch and release entertainment. Anglers slightly exceeded their 1,000 fish quota by about 200 fish. Bass and walleye anglers have an extended late season stretch of good weather to cash in on. Water temps are still in line for productive fishing.

The weather is beautiful and the fishing is fine on the lower McKenzie. Just go. Take October and other Caddis patterns along with some Adams and some Prince, Possie Bugger and similar nymphs.

The Santiam system has good numbers of coho for those who can crack the code on the challenging fish. Popular lures are jigs and spinners. Try from the rest stop on the mainstem up the North Santiam for the best chance of a hookup.

Not much to report on the Clackamas River but low water and the occasional silver salmon being caught. The next rain might bring a few more into the system.

Water is getting low on the Sandy River as well and a few silvers are still in the system. Best action is reported from the mouth and up near Cedar Creek. Jigs and spinners are the go-to lures with cured roe being the bait of choice.

Northwest – After a great early season, Tillamook Bay fishing has slowed as it has in years past at this time. Historically, mid-October to mid-November has produced great catches and that remains to be seen this year. With an already strong showing of Wilson chinook, the run that fuels the late season bite, anglers remain hopeful and results are likely to improve. Ocean fishing for chinook will close after October 31st but has remained one of the best options lately. Deep reef bottomfish seekers have been taking advantage of the all-depth opportunities and being rewarded accordingly. Ocean crabbing will remain closed until at least December 1st but is slightly improving in coastal estuaries.

The Nehalem remains an option although it too has slowed slightly. The run here is likely to taper after this week but persistent anglers may still be rewarded. Bobber fishers are taking fair quality fish in tidewater using eggs and shrimp combinations.

Another good round of precipitation will do the north coast systems some good but there is none in sight. Until then, anglers should target the tidewater sections of the Nestucca, Siletz and Alsea with the Salmon a distant second choice. Bobber and bait will take the most fish but trollers will take some fish too.

The lower Columbia is absent anglers but crabbing will only get better through late November. Pick the softer tides to maximize catches. Good clamming tides won't come around again until early November.

Southwest- Bottom fishing out of central Oregon ports has slowed. Everyone is still catching rockfish and lings but not limits as they were last week.

As ocean water temperatures drop, it appears that tuna hopefuls have made their last run for the season.

Long-range offshore forecasts look favorable for ocean launches although conditions are predicted to become more challenging late in the coming weekend.

Bay crabbing is expected to show improvement with salinity levels good and weather conditions friendly this week.

Catches of rockfish and lingcod have been good when boats have been able to get out on the ocean from Gold Beach. Trollers in Rogue Bay are taking decent numbers of chinook and coho. Fishing off the mouth of Indian Creek has picked up with chinook gathering to run up to the hatchery on that tributary. Steelhead and coho are available in good number around Agness. Anglers on the middle river are catching steelhead on an assortment of baits and lures. The upper Rogue is fishing well as summer steelhead continue to lie in tailouts below spawning chinook. Fly casters will score with egg patterns.

With the ocean closed for salmon fishing, trollers are working Brookings Harbor while shore-bound anglers cast spoons and spinners from the crab pier but chinook catches have been only fair at best. Fish with the tides for best results. The Chetco River opens above River Mile 2.2 on November 2nd.

While the Elk River is running low and clear in the absence of precipitation, it gave up more than a dozen chinook on Sunday, October 20.

Trout catches continue to slowly improve at Diamond Lake with bait fishing on the north end yielding the best results.

SW Washington- The Lewis remains a top option for quality chinook but the Cowlitz and Kalama will also produce some late season chinook and coho into November. Coho numbers back to the hatchery reared systems should be peaking for fresh fish this week. After that, quality will deteriorate.

The mouths of the Klickitat and White Salmon have slowed somewhat and with the absence of a strong coho return, should continue to wane into early November. It has been a great season however.

Eastern – Trout fishing remains better than steelheading on the lower Deschutes although fresh summers continue to enter. Water level and flow have improved with upstream irrigation efforts shut down.

Fly anglers are reminded that during extended mild, sunny weather, trout will be making terrestrials a significant part of their diet.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With few anglers participating in the Buoy 10 fishery, reports are sparse but there should be a few coho still available for persistent trollers working this area. With the salmon largely gone, the estuary will start to draw more interest for crabbers in the coming weeks. The commercial pots likely go in around December 1st. With the softening tide series coming up, serious crabbers should consider a trip.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "On the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, anglers continue to catch fall Chinook although the bite is becoming sporadic and many of the fish are getting quite dark. The daily adult Chinook count over Bonneville Dam has dropped into the hundreds rather than thousands indicating the end of the run is near. A large portion of the Chinook present will spawn right below the dam.

You might have to catch four or five fish to get an acceptable keeper so anglers should take note and consider letting these fish spawn in peace. Starting November 1st, anglers can no longer fish from a floating device above Beacon Rock."

The Guide's Forecast – For salmon fishers, put a fork in it, it's done! There may be a rare coho taken but if you're a crabber, action will be good this week. The soft tide series we're currently on only means great crabbing ahead. Put your pots anywhere downstream of Hammond, targeting 25 to 35 feet of water. That doesn't mean you don't have to still watch the tide exchange as the outgoing can still sweep buoys underwater, making them impossible to retrieve until the tide slows down.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "As the Chinook run peters out, the space between boats will become greater and anglers should consider catch and release sturgeon fishing below Bonneville Dam. Big sturgeon love to feed on dead salmon and carcasses are already present at the creek mouths. Remember that angling from a floating device is not allowed above Beacon rock starting on November 1st."

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Saturdays sturgeon opener on the Willamette River below Willamette Falls proved to be quite productive for many anglers and the turn-out was also surprising. Many reports came in of boats limiting with three, four or five keepers from Oregon City, Milwaukie, the harbor and Multnomah Channel indicating the river has plenty of fish in it for catch and release entertainment. Less than one hundred silvers a day are climbing the fish ladder at Willamette Falls, but a few anglers are still giving it a try at the mouth of the Tualatin with nominal success. Red wiggle warts and blue fox spinners are the preferred lures. Bass and walleye anglers have an extended late season stretch of good weather to cash in on, with water temps still in line for productive fishing. The Multnomah Channel should produce well for both species."

Sturgeon retention remains open seven days a week on the Willamette River upstream of Willamette Falls with a size restriction of 38 to 54 inches fork length. The bag limit is one sturgeon per day and two per year.

Speaking of upper river fishing, something seems to have occurred with the fish counts in September ... the 17th to the 21st, specifically, during which time no fish of any species was counted and, without data to carry forward, cumulative counts were discontinued. We mention this because, without that data, there's no way to know with any degree of accuracy, just how many coho have crossed at the Falls bound for upper river tributaries. One thing's sure; it's a remarkable number this year.

Anglers seeking serenity, beauty and willing trout will find flows on the McKenzie River to be similar to those at this time in September. The river has been on a gradual drop and conditions are good for fishing.

The Santiam system has dropped and cleared but remains in good condition for fishing Coho may be taken below the Stayton-Scio bridge on the North and below the Grant Street bridge on the South until Nov. 1st.

Alton Baker Canal was stocked with hatchery trout this week.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Catch and release sturgeon fishing should be the number one game in town if fishing the Willamette river is your preference. Last week's one day opener proved quite productive for anglers en mass, from Willamette Falls down to the mouth near Kelly Point Park. Smallmouth bass should also be on tap and the rocky

ledges in and around Milwaukie should give up a few hungry smallies. The Multnomah Channel should also kick out a few fat, fall walleye."

Two coho per day may be kept and they don't have to be fin-clipped. Geed thing, too, as you'd be hard-pressed to find a hatchery silver in the Willamette above the Falls. Coho have earned a reputation as being a difficult fish to coax into biting or striking a lure in freshwater rivers and deservedly so. Anglers have a better shot at a decent coho than a quality summer steelhead on the Santiams at this time of year. Try spanners, bobber and jig or drifting good-quality, cured salmon eggs. Then try it again at a different location. These fish seem to go on and off the bite on their own secret schedule.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Not much to report on the Clackamas River but low water and the occasional silver salmon being caught. The next rain might bring a few more into the system.

"Water is getting low on the Sandy River as well and a few silvers are still in the system. Best action is reported from the mouth and up near Cedar Creek. Jigs and spinners are the go-to lures with cured roe being the bait of choice."

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Don't expect much from the Clackamas River until winter steelhead start to show in late December. The Silver run has again been rather dismal and until ODFW starts stocking acceptable numbers of fish, the river will remain a ghost town for the fall months.

"The silver run has tapered off on the Sandy but a few stragglers are still hanging around. More rain is needed to bring the river up and suck in the tail end of the run. Look to the mouth and Cedar Creek for the best opportunity."

North Coast Fishing Report – After a slow start to the week, Tillamook finally fired off again on Wednesday with one guide reporting going 5 for 6 on the morning outgoing tide at the jaws using herring. Prior to Wednesday, sparse results were being had between all the regular spots; Ghost Hole, Bay City and the West Channel. The ocean has been too rough recently but the bar opened up on Wednesday afternoon and fish were being caught out there in the afternoon. This is the tide series many of us wait on to take advantage of a long period of opportunity when chinook cross the bar on the softer outgoing current. Once the jetty bite slows, most anglers head back up-bay, holding at the Ghost Hole or Bay City for the incoming tide bite, just a little later. Herring of course remains king but surprisingly, spinners continue to take fish on a fairly consistent basis in the middle and lower bay. The last day I fished (Sunday), we only caught 2 fish but one was on a spinner at Bay City. The 17-pounder slack line bit a red/white copper back Fatal Flash size 7 spinner just before low slack. The other chinook came from a trolled herring on the south side of the south jetty, in the ocean in the afternoon. If this outgoing tide bit holds up, it's a positive indication that we'll get that great fishing we've been missing come November.

Tidewater of the Wilson and Trash definitely slowed up along with the bay bite. It was pretty clear that there has been a lack of fresh fish from the ocean to feed this fishery too but that should change again if the fish keep coming. Rivers remain very low and clear so driftboaters continue to just work the tidewater areas.

The Nehalem is holding up but that can't last too much longer. Given the fact the run over there has been stellar, good action will likely hold up longer this year than most. Although it's been Wheeler and Nehalem kicking out the most fish recently, with the weak tide series we're headed into effort will re-

focus to the mouth/jetty, assuming the area is safe to fish. The long-term ocean forecast looks like calm seas ahead.

The Nestucca is still on although numbers should be dropping off there too. Like other systems, fresh fish will be a welcome sight and they should come pretty soon. Tidewater anglers are taking a few fish but the fleet is gravitating towards the mouth to drown herring on the upcoming soft tide series.

The Salmon River is largely over but a few fish continue to trickle in. Most anglers are targeting fresher fish around Highway 101 but interest is waning fast. The Siletz and Alsea are better options at this point.

Bay crabbing is slightly improving but we should get a real taste of success on the upcoming soft tide series. The Lower Columbia remains the best option but most north coast estuaries should produce better than they have been most recently.

The Guide's Forecast – As we enter the second half of the Tillamook season, it appears as if a second showing of late-season chinook will come to fruition. The fishery showed signs of recovering after a slow weeks' worth of fishing as of Wednesday, the bite at the jaws took off again. **Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** stated that he was about the second boat to the jetty on Wednesday morning. In the first 20 minutes of fishing, they had their first bite, followed by several other bites over the course of the outgoing tide. By the time his hot action was over, they had 6 chances, landing 5 chinook, all in the jaws. The current tide series dictates that anglers target salmon at the jaws as a soft outgoing push will bring in fish for a large portion of the outgoing tide. We're coming into those ideal conditions now. Chris also reportedly shot up the west channel for the flood tide, only yielding a single, solitary bite for the rest of his afternoon's effort. Chris reported less than impressive fishing on the east side of the bay (Ghost Hole/Bay City) as most guides found themselves in the west channel in anticipation of a high tide bite. The upper bay continues to yield poor results; likely to continue through the weekend. As a general rule, fish low in the estuary during low tide exchanges and high in the estuary during high tidal exchanges.

The past week, anglers fishing tidewater have typically come away disappointed. If indeed a new pod of fish are showing up, the tidewater fishery, particularly the Wilson and Trask, with some additional Tillamook River fish, should again start to produce fair to good results. It's always best to target tidewater fish during the last few hours of outgoing tide, using a shrimp and egg combination bait. Of course, action can occur at any time, and high slack can sometimes yield some biters as well. The Wilson River should become a stronger player during this late season but anglers can oftentimes count on another round of fish to the Trask and Tillamook systems, even this late in the season. It's especially common when we have large numbers of fish coming back like we do this year.

You still can't count on many large fish in the system as my season tally so far is 103 salmon, of which only one reached the 30-pound benchmark.

The Nehalem system is likely to still produce viable catches but is scheduled to slow by early November. The later than normal success solely rests on the fact that this system has produce excellent catches for the last several months. The weaker tides this weekend will keep the fleet focused on the bar and near the jetties, especially if the ocean forecast holds true. Here is that ocean forecast by the way:

FRI

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT.
W SWELL 4 FT AT 10 SECONDS. AREAS OF FOG AND DRIZZLE.

FRI NIGHT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT

AT 10 SECONDS. AREAS OF FOG AND DRIZZLE.

SAT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT.
W SWELL 3 FT AT 12 SECONDS. AREAS OF FOG AND DRIZZLE.

SAT NIGHT

N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

SUN

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

MON

NE WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

Although traffic on other coastal systems has been relatively light, the Nestucca, Salmon, Siletz and Alsea still all remain viable options. Although the run on the Salmon River is waning, anglers should carefully target salmon in the lower reaches this weekend. Bay entrances will likely produce the best catches on this soft outgoing tide series. The ocean may very well be an option as well before the statewide October 31st closure. With this awesome onset of late season weather, it's too bad ocean crabbing is no longer an option.

Bay crabbing however is. With softer tides this weekend and the absence of fresh water should make for productive catches for sea-spider harvesters.

Boats that have offshore capabilities could explore deep-reef bottomfish options. Sea bass and lingcod action can be quite phenomenal this time of year and certainly nice ocean weather is a rarity this time of year. Although there's not much else to pursue in the salt with tuna gone and halibut closed, deep water chinook fishing can still certainly be a good prospect. We got one nice chinook the other day in about 95 feet of water, just SW of the Tillamook Bay entrance, just shy of the bottom after spotting schools of baitfish on the fish finder and active birds working these schools. Just the day before, one sport boat sat on top of them, catching near limits of chinook trolling in the deep water. These fish are typically California fish, which will be foraging another year or two before heading south. It can be pretty challenging to effectively fish this deep water without downriggers however.

Central & South Coast Reports – Charter boats cancelled trips earlier this week due to rough conditions out of Newport and Depoe Bay. Offshore forecasts are friendly this week through Saturday for central Oregon ports with swells predicted to increase slightly starting Sunday, October 27th.

ODFW fish checkers observer over the last week that while bottom fish catches dropped off for central Oregon ports, they improved for those launching from the south coast. There is no restriction on the depths offshore boats may fish for groundfish until April 1, 2014.

The window of opportunity during which trollers can take a bright, fresh offshore salmon is narrowing. Retention of ocean-caught Chinook ends on Halloween. Only one fish is allowed for the season.

It's worth mentioning one (hopefully) last time: Ocean crabbing closed on October 15th. The question came up again over the past week with offshore Dungeness hunters hoping the crab season mirrored that of ocean Chinook.

ODFW issued a Sea Foam Report this week: "Strong waves and wind from the first winter storm injected air into the ocean and created mountains of sea foam. The air bubbles in the presence of dissolved organic matter is what causes sea foam to form. The organic matter is mostly made of dead phytoplankton. The protein from the phytoplankton gives the water enough surface tension to form bubbles. Surf and winds cause the bubbles to pile up in suds-like masses that are often blown up on the beach. Although this may look worrisome, it is a perfectly natural process that helps the ocean purify its self. Viewed under a microscope, sea foam contains the extraordinarily beautiful glass-like skeletons of the phytoplankton."

Fishing is slow on the Alsea. Most of the Chinook that have entered are upstream on spawning beds now and low, clear water conditions have slowed wild coho migration. A few coo have been caught recently as they have come in with the tide.

Siuslaw salmon fishers have been taking good numbers of fish this season although popular spots have been jammed with anglers. It's quite possible, even easy, to get away from the crowds as fish are holding in various locations. Fishing plugs in a hole that isn't as heavily-trafficked should be rewarding.

Charter and recreational craft launching out of Reedsport are making good catches of rockfish and have been landing some hefty ling cod. Bay crabbing is slow. Only a few boats may be seen trolling herring at Winchester bay in hopes of a Chinook hookup. The majority of this activity is occurring at the jaws and has resulted in some fish being landed. The bay has become the domain of the bobber and bait fisher, however, with most offering a combination of cured eggs and live sand shrimp, a frequent favorite bait for Chinook in October. Angers are not limited to bay fishing at this time of year with salmon well-distributed and biting on the Umpqua from Tyee to Wells Creek, 40 miles upstream. Smallmouth bass catches are surprisingly good despite the change in season and drop in water temperatures. Steelheading is fair on the North Umpqua with the Swiftwater area producing the best results.

Crabbing has improved slightly at Coos Bay for those dropping traps or nets from boats with best results coming near the jetties. Chinook fishing has slowed but a few are still being taken daily by trollers using herring with the upper bay most productive. Wild coho may be taken here through the end of November and catches have been fair to good recently. The bag limit is one per day and two for the season. Casting or trolling spinners has been most effective.

Chinook fishing in Coquille tidewater has slowed although a fair number of wild coho are being taken here. The bag limit is the same as for the Coos system with the two per year being from any of the coastal coho fisheries combined.

Rogue Bay trollers are enduring slow fishing for Chinook and coho. Efforts are best directed at Indian Creek Chinook as they stage near the creek mouth. Fishing for steelhead and half-pounders is ongoing and worthwhile in the Agness stretch. Spinners, flies and bait have all been effective at times for steelhead on the middle Rogue. Fly fishers on the upper rover are having fun with summer steelhead by casting egg imitations to then as they hold below spawning Chinook. Catches have been fair recently. One fly angler commented that he intends to target coho on the upper Rogue using pink flies on a spey rod. He seems pretty confident that this technique will score for him,

Boats may continue to launch out of the Port of Brookings for halibut through the last day of October. The Chetco River at Brookings is flowing at 350 cfs and without precipitation in the forecast, will be subject to further reduction, This situation will have Chinook keged up in Brookings Harbor where anglers can have their way with them. In addition to boat fishing, casting from the dock at the South Jetty will produce Chinook. Water of the Chetco River will open above RM 2.2 on November 1st although Chinook may not be kept above Nook Creek.

With the Elk River low and clear, fishing is predictably slow. About one in four anglers is landing a Chinook. The Elk River fall Chinook terminal area fishery will open November 1st for the entire month. The challenge is getting out on the ocean at that time of year. Details of the fishery are available here*.

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/Regulations/docs/2013 Elk SW Sport.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/Regulations/docs/2013_Elk_SW_Sport.pdf)

Bradley Lake has been planted with hatchery trout this week.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Trout fishing is fair to good on the lower Deschutes. Steelheading has been less than reliable over the past week or so with Mecca to South Junction as good a bet as any.

Crooked River. Yeah, it's like this: [*http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJh7UciGrVQ#t=128](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJh7UciGrVQ#t=128)

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Subscriber Bruce O. wrote this week, "I will sign up again for next year.. I'd like to see more stuff from the south coast in your weekly update. Coos Bay, Coquille, Elk, Sixes, Chetco, Rogue, both in shore and off.. Thanks."

TGF go-editor Michael Teague (who covers the south coast) responds, Hi, Bruce -

We get this sort of question periodically. Our reports are contingent upon your reports! That is, folks like you fishing these areas who share with our readers (through the TGF writers) in addition to whatever guides are fishing the area. I promise we're not withholding information. We share everything we receive, combine it and edit it onto what we hope will be a readable, informative newsletter.

Please remember this following your next fishing trip. Send us a report!

Best,

Michael

Reader Frank H. wrote to ask, "I don't see much about the Umpqua on your site. Why is that?"

Hi, Frank -

Please take a look at the Umpqua report for details from offshore to Winchester Bay to the mainstem and up into the North Umpqua. There's no South Umpqua report as it is closed to fishing. This isn't an exceptional report but pretty much what's written weekly. If you are only seeing the "Fisheries Forecast," let me know and I'll show you the difference in the subscription version.

Best,

Michael

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Michael Teague: TGFMichael@gmail.com

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

Random Links

Some thoughts on the Deschutes fish kill and over allocation:

<http://www.bendsource.com/Bent/archives/2013/10/18/low-water-leaves-scores-of-fish-dead-on-upper-deschutes>

A report from the Native Fish Society:

http://nativefishsociety.org/documents/UpperDeschutesReport072210lowres_001.pdf

ODFW had the following comments:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2013/october/102313.asp>

Send your comments on the situation to the Oregon Water Resources Department:

<http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/index.aspx>

GOOD LUCK!