

The Guide's Forecast - volume 16 issue number 29

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 18th – July 24th, 2014**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

NOW IS THE TIME to prep yourself for a RECORD return of salmon on the lower Columbia. Don't go into this fishery thinking it's still going to be easy! Go to our tech report page at: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml> and order your Buoy 10 tech report for home study. You'll need every advantage you can to outshine the competition you'll have this year. Good luck!

Willamette Valley/Metro – With summer steelhead numbers peaking, interest in the gorge is also peaking. It's a race however; as temperatures rise, success will drop. Small spinners and plugs will take fish in the fast water at Bonneville while beach plunkers down to Longview will take fish off of area beaches using spin-n-glos and coon shrimp.

Spring chinook and summer steelhead counts are dwindling at Willamette Falls with the water temperature climbing past the mid-70s. Bass fishing has been good on the lower Willamette. As with most summer angling fare, mornings and evenings have been most productive. Catch-and release sturgeon fishing is receiving slight attention with fair to good results in the Portland Harbor. Salmon and steelhead are primarily concerned with escaping the warm water of the lower river for cooler alternatives upstream.

Hot weather combined with low water creates less than ideal fishing conditions. The McKenzie has been fishing fair early and late in the day, however. In the absence of hatches, try terrestrial patterns, attractors or nymphs fished in deeper water.

North Santiam levels have been on the drop over the past week and are expected to continue in this trend with no rain in sight. With a denser fish population consisting of both salmon and steelhead with the bonus of stable flows, the South Santiam is the better bet for weekend fishing.

As the Clackamas has continued to drop and clear, fishing results have continued to slow. First and last light fishing become the only options in these conditions with the probability of a steelhead hookup greater than that of a springer in skinny water.

The Sandy is fishing fair at best with only mornings and evenings offering the opportunity for some action. Gray-green water conditions are expected on the Sandy at this time of year due to its glacial origins but some fish are being taken regardless by anglers fishing high on the system.

Northwest – With a staging population of salmon at the mouth of the Columbia, ocean salmon trollers are enjoying easy limits on both the south and north sides of the river entrance. One boat reported multiple whales and birds feeding on evident baitfish NW of the river mouth. He attained a 16-fish limit in just under an hour. Chinook were oddly absent however; that should change in the near future.

Sturgeon fishing remains nothing short of awesome. Fresh anchovies is all you need and action will likely remain excellent through July. Keeper range fish have inundated the estuary but no one area is consistent. Targeting fish in the deeper water as temperatures rise should produce remarkable catches from the East End Basin to the mouth of the Skipanon River.

Further south, coho action is picking up but limits are not necessarily the rule. Garibaldi is posting consistent catches but action should ramp up as Columbia River coho migrate up the coast. Chinook are rare in the catch here too but they should start to show in better numbers next month. Offshore and bay

crabbing is picking up and crab are starting to fill out a bit more. Halibut fishing out of Garibaldi is fair for those targeting fish in the 150 to 190 foot range.

The Nehalem system is starting to produce more consistent catches of chinook. The soft outgoing tides over the weekend should produce good to great chinook catches in the jaws for herring trollers. Bay crabbing is picking up here too.

Albacore become more prevalent out of Garibaldi this time of year. Good catches were reported when seas permitted but fish remained out of reach for many. Seas may calm by the weekend.

Southwest- Bottomfishing out of Depoe Bay is yielding great catches of rockfish but lingcod remain elusive. Ocean salmon trolling is producing primarily coho with a high percentage of those hatchery fish. Many limits are returning to port on charter and sport craft.

Albacore anglers were frustrated over the past weekend as tuna were nearly 50 miles offshore, a distance at which they are out of reach of most recreational boats.

Salmon fishing and ocean crabbing are producing limits for boats out of Reedsport. The pinkfin surf perch fishery showed no signs of waning on the lower Umpqua over the past weekend.

Offshore boaters launching out of Charleston have been enjoying a variety of options. Crabbing is good and bottomfishing has produced excellent results. Boats venturing 25 to 30 miles out of port have been scoring some seasonally large tuna.

When boats have been able to get out of Gold beach, bottomfishing has been excellent. Most are returning with limits of rockfish, lingcod and Dungeness. Salmon trollers have found chinook and coho on the bite. A few fall chinook are being taken in Rogue Bay but it's still early for these fish. While the lower Rogue isn't offering much to anglers, summer steelhead are being caught by bait fishers on the middle river with best results occurring in the evening. Spring chinook catches are fair to good on the upper Rogue with summer steelhead hitting occasionally.

Local residents are saying the salmon fishing out of Brookings is the best in decades. That's a bold statement but the scores of three and four-salt chinook and hatchery coho which are weighing in at 10 pounds or better at the cleaning tables seems to substantiate it. Best results have come to those trolling anchovies near the Oregon/California border.

Diamond Lake was stocked over the past week to boost catches but the effect was minimal due to warm water. Fish deep for best results.

Eastern – Caddis are hatching on the Warm Springs to Trout Creek drift on the lower Deschutes and large reddsides are responding well to imitations. Steelhead fishing remains spotty but should improve in the coming weeks.

While hookups begin to slow on the Crooked River at this time of year, catches will remain steady. It'll be mostly a nymph show throughout the month with Caddis variations most effective.

Water levels on the Willowa River are finally dropping. The stonefly hatch is about done but Caddis are hatching in earnest.

Good-sized bull trout and rainbows are being taken on the Grande Ronde River now that flows have dramatically moderated. Try large, dark, wet offerings.

Fishing is fair to good at East Lake where fly anglers have been taking mostly rainbows and a few brown trout to 18 inches on nymphs.

SW Washington- The Cowlitz River remains the hot spot for all district tributaries but the most effort is taking place along lower Columbia beaches. Plunkers will continue to have good access to fish for the next few weeks but warming water temperatures may slow the bite. Sockeye and fin-clipped chinook remain open but fewer are showing in the catches.

Tributaries are still weeks away from measureable salmon runs but steelhead should keep side-drifters and bank anglers interested for the next several days. Early mornings remain best but these tributaries are expected to be plugged with coho and chinook in the months of August and September.

Soapbox Update: Here's our action alert from last week. PLEASE DO THIS FOR THE FUTURE OF SPORTFISHING ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER:

It's good times for salmon on the mainstem Columbia and thanks in large part to spring and summer flow for out-migrating juveniles. It's high time that you commented on the benefits of spring and summer spill on the mainstem Columbia. Email Richard Whitman and Brett Brownscombe on how we appreciate Oregon advocating for spring and summer flow. Here are their email addresses, they are negotiating with Bonneville Power Administration on appropriate flow and spill regimes for the mainstem Columbia:

PLEASE reach out to:

Brett Brownscombe: brett.brownscombe@gmail.com and
Richard Whitman: Richard.M.Whitman@state.or.us

It's long past time that these two natural resource advisors hear from us on the importance of flow and spill! It's a small ask for a big return on investment! Please email NOW!

Columbia River Fishing Report – Not much has changed on the lower Columbia. Salmon and sturgeon fishing remains excellent and steelhead fishing, while many are present, is waning, likely due to the fact the river is quickly warming, distracting steelhead from biting as they make the slow road to Idaho.

Starting with salmon, offshore salmon anglers are still finding easy limits of mostly coho out of the mouth of the Columbia River. Still targeting fish to the south of the mouth, anglers are zeroed in to easy limits although chinook remain largely absent from the creel. The earlier you go, the earlier your limit and anglers are reporting ample catches and back to the dock in time for breakfast. Coho are ranging from 5 to 9 pounds and anglers are happy to report a high incidence of hatchery fish present. It's becoming increasingly clear that the prediction of 900,000 returning coho may actually come to fruition. Anglers to the south of Cape Falcon will have some good opportunity for wild coho later in September but we'll report on that later on. It really can't be that much easier, head to 90 to 140 foot of water and drop your fresh anchovies over-board and proceed to catch your limit. No need to get picky about the fish you're going to keep; they're all ranging in the "cookie-cutter" 5 to 9-pound range. There has been some effort along the Long Beach Peninsula recently, targeting chinook in the 25 to 35 foot of water. Results haven't been productive however with one guide reporting about an hour's worth of effort for no bites. That guide proceeded to head west into 80 foot of water where he saw multiple whales and birds working a large school of baitfish and caught the boat limit in just under an hour, trolling circles around the bait ball. It's almost like Alaska out there, except more productive. Not much more to say about the slam dunk salmon fishing, we'll give more details on how to approach it next week in the forecast section.

Sturgeon fishing remains nothing short of epic. Catch and release opportunities are as good as it gets with boats reporting tired anglers after just 4 or 5 hours of fishing. Doubles and triples are very common

for a boat load of 5 or 6 anglers yet pressure remains very light. Waters are warming so fish are becoming more lethargic but that doesn't seem to deter the bite however. One guide boat was reporting excellent catches on the north side of Rice Island but that same guide boat was reporting multiple jumpers on the green line just out of Warrenton last week; of course a hellacious day of catch and release fishing ensued. For those that took advantage of the summer consumptive opportunity in the Bonneville and The Dalles Pools, catches were quite good. Here are those catch stats from ODF&W:

Bonneville Pool:

Weekly checking showed three legal white sturgeon kept, plus one oversize and 49 sublegal sturgeon released for 22 bank anglers; and 33 legal white sturgeon kept, plus two legal, 13 oversize and 618 sublegal sturgeon released for 27 boats (148 anglers).

The Dalles Pool:

Weekly checking showed three legal white sturgeon kept, plus one legal and 34 sublegal sturgeon released for three boats (six anglers).

Bottomfishing out of Astoria becomes a fair option if seas remain calm. Anglers are reporting consistent catches of sea bass from the south jetty. Although limits are easy, they are attainable. Lingcod remain elusive.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia River Estuary is improving but is best in the ocean. Although many of the crab remain in the softshell state, higher quality crab are starting to show in the catch. It seems you're more likely to catch a higher quality crab in the river versus the ocean.

If you're a beach plunker, summer steelhead fishing is high on the mind. Action should be excellent right now as numbers continue to climb. We're not far from peak passage at Bonneville and all indications are for a great return this year. The last minus tide series did produce good catches along lower Columbia beaches but not what you'd expect for the passage we're starting to witness at Bonneville Dam. Summer chinook passage is waning at Bonneville and the chance of intercepting one, let alone one of the hatchery variety, is dissipating. You're more likely to have some great action upriver, intercepting a school of summers near Kalama or at Bonneville. As numbers continue to climb, action should too, especially in the gorge where catches can be explosive at times. We're not far away from peak fishing so be prepared for it! As you can see, catches are really ramping up for steelhead although hatchery fish are not making up the bulk of the catch, which isn't unheard of for this fishery. Here are the in-river catches from the weekend effort:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped adult Chinook, one sockeye and two adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus two unclipped adult Chinook and six unclipped summer steelhead released for 24 bank anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead and two sockeye kept, plus nine unclipped adult Chinook, two sockeye and 16 unclipped steelhead released for 22 boats (62 anglers).

Troutdale Bank:

Weekend checking showed no catch for two bank anglers.

Troutdale Boats:

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped adult Chinook kept, plus three unclipped steelhead released for 23 boats (46 anglers).

Portland to Westport Bank:

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped adult Chinook and one adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus two unclipped steelhead released for 28 bank anglers.

Portland to Westport Boats:

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus one unclipped adult Chinook and five unclipped steelhead released for 31 boats (61 anglers).

Estuary Bank (Clatsop Spit to Wauna Powerlines):

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept and two unclipped summer steelhead released for 10 bank anglers.

Estuary Boats (Tongue Point to Wauna Powerlines):

Weekend checking showed 16 adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead and one adipose fin-clipped adult Chinook kept, plus one unclipped adult Chinook and 13 unclipped steelhead released for 11 boats (23 anglers).

The Guide's Forecast – There's a lot to look forward to for Columbia River anglers. With a fairly calm offshore forecast, there should be excellent opportunity for the gobs of coho just offshore. With high-finers not as prevalent as years past, it should mean early limits for those sticking to the traditional coho grounds which are SW of the river mouth. After cautiously crossing the bar (you can check bar conditions from our home page), head to Buoy 2 and begin trolling SW. You should have your fish in short order but don't overlook the option to go back over your productive water when you find it, you might be surprised how the fish definitively hold in the same area, likely because there is bait fish in that area. If you find yourself fishing a little later in the morning and not getting the bites you should be getting, drop your offerings down deeper, maybe as deep as 40 to 50 feet to see if that's where the feeding fish are holding. It's already worked quite often this year but do start your day off fishing shallow as that's likely where the action will be the earlier you get yourself out on the water. You can try fishing to the north and chinook are due to start showing in greater numbers along the beach off of Longview but what greater feeling is there than coming back to port with an early limit and catching breakfast at a local establishment? You can use divers and flashers but they're far from necessary this year. Light lead and a "naked" anchovy will produce all the results you need AND you'll be able to feel those whopping 6-pound coho fight.

Or, maybe you can spend your late morning pursuing the multitudes of sturgeon that are plying the estuary. With your leftover anchovies (or if you brought sand shrimp), it wouldn't be unrealistic to expect some double-digit action for large sturgeon from the Astoria/Megler Bridge to Hammond. Of course the lower and deeper you fish, the more you'll be molested by the juvenile crab that are present in good numbers. And oh yes, dropping crab pots in the river over the weekend is not a bad idea either. The soft tide series should produce some fair catches, especially if you are using fresh salmon carcasses, or tuna, for bait. Bigger and more plentiful crab catches will likely happen offshore but you'll also run into more softshell crab too. You can crab in the ocean to the south or to the north but you have to be sure to adhere to Washington's crab regulations if you're crabbing to the north.

We're still two weeks away from the start of the Buoy 10 fishery but it promises to be a barn-burner this year; I'm sure you've heard. Meanwhile, summer steelhead remain a strong option but with a weak tide series in store for the weekend, don't go into this fishery with sky-high expectations, at least in the lower river. Upriver, Kalama and Bonneville anglers should have more consistent flows to keep their gear working and action should be quite good. Bonneville in particular, should really pick up this week as passage numbers begin to peak. Small spinners and hot-colored spin-n-glos should produce good catches in the gorge and for the bank angling community as well. These fish will certainly follow lanes but the sweetest spots are rock out-croppings where fish clearly travel around these well-defined points of land to make their way upstream. It's the perfect place to intercept them. Summer chinook will become more rare by the day, Bonneville passage is tapering rapidly.

But let's hear it for the record run of sockeye! If anyone really figures out how to target these fish, it may make for some quality action in the future. The bulk of this year's run has already passed Bonneville but it's further scientific reasoning for continuing to pressure the state of Oregon to enter the BiOp lawsuit with the multitude of conservation organizations. Did you do your duty and email the Governor's office, requesting that Oregon join the lawsuit as they have in the past. We need spill if we wish to continue to generate these kinds of returns. See our action alert in the Soapbox Update!

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Willamette Falls spring chinook and summer steelhead counts are in the low double digits, a range to which these numbers dropped in a week once the water climbed into the mid-70 degree range as the flow dropped to summertime levels. Besides, one must take into consideration the 18,000 summers and 28,000 springers that are in the upper Willamette tributaries now, waiting for you to figure out how to catch them.

Flows at the McKenzie are fairly stable around the 2,300 cfs range with only slight fluctuations. This is an excellent water condition for fishing despite the high, bright skies. The Mack was stocked the week of July 7 with 3,750 rainbow trout which were released from Leaburg Town Landing down to Hendricks Bridge. The ODFW advises that anglers should check salmon and steelhead counts over Willamette Falls and allow 10-14 days for fish to arrive in the Eugene-Springfield area.

A report from Linton Lake indicated a good number of brown trout in obvious residence but finicky about taking flies. There have been a few caught here that best measured in pounds rather than inches but average size is 15 to 16 inches.

Of those thousands of springers and summers which have been counted at Willamette Falls, over 6,200 spring Chinook and 3,000 summer steelhead have already made it above Stayton on the North Santiam through July 12th. The South Santiam is stable with a three foot depth and 980 cfs at Waterloo and is forecast to remain that way through the remainder of July.

The Guide's Forecast – The lower Willamette is just slightly better than the "biological desert" as **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** quipped during a telephone interview. There's actually a very small contingent of hopefuls still working the river for salmon picking up springers on rare occasion in the St. Johns area near the head of Multnomah Channel. A much better bet would be the warm water fishing opportunities on the Willamette for bass and panfish. Work the rocky shorelines and around areas with structure for best results and, as with other species at this time of year, fish early and late in the day when the fish are most likely to bite and when recreational non-anglers are least likely to be on the water.

McKenzie anglers have been doing fairly well for trout from Hendricks Bridge to Armitage Park. Hardware has been effective as has fly fishing with Woolly Buggers. Some anglers have done very well this week targeting summer steelhead as there are decent numbers in the McKenzie now for anglers hitting the right place at the right time. Try spinners are dark-colored jigs.

When the 'bite' is on, bobbers and jigs are the preferred angling method with spoons, spinners and egg clusters also being effective. Currently the entire river below the Minto Fish Facility is open to salmon and steelhead fishing. A reminder that the bag limit on trout has increased to five adipose fin-clipped fish in the Santiam River basin, and there is no restriction on the size of fish kept and the bag limit on fin-clipped steelhead has increased by one fish on the lower Santiam.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – With the Clackamas level forecast to dip below the 11-foot mark at Estacada and the long-range prediction a continued drop, expect less-than-ideal conditions for the foreseeable future. Coupled with rising water temperature, this situation will cause a lull in fishing action.

The Sandy River is around 8.4 feet at the town of Sandy with the flow about 750 cfs and dropping. Warm daytime temperatures every day, reaching up to higher elevations, is keeping the Sandy in a constant state of glacial runoff. Not everybody thinks this is a bad thing however, as Sandy regulars fish these conditions with some even preferring it. After all, fish won't spook if they can't see you but it's best to tread lightly on the bank.

The Guide's Forecast – There are summer steelhead scattered throughout the Clackamas River and spring Chinook are upstream with fish being landed according to **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)**. Jigs, spoons and spinners have all hooked fish at times. Bank anglers working above Faraday are also landing a few fish. Anglers should take note that an angling deadline is clearly marked up near Rivermill Dam and the fishway; it is illegal to fish or even cast above this deadline. Drifting the Clackamas is possible but is not without risks. Scout ahead and be prepared to get out and drag the boat occasionally. That said, steelhead have been taken on hardware over the past week by those willing to rise before the happy-splashers start their daily downriver migration. Carver up to McIver Park is one of the more productive stretches. Summer steelhead have been recycled from the North Fork fish trap or Clackamas Hatchery and released at Riverside and Carver parks every week through roughly mid-July."

Despite the low angler effort and tough fishing conditions, fishing is fair with the Sandy producing a few springers and summer steelhead daily. Spinners are a particularly good choice in the frequently opaque waters of this glacial stream. Speaking of which, Blue Fox spinners are arguably the brand most-used by steelheaders (including this writer). Don't overlook the less-popular finishes such as bronze or copper. Sometimes it's the little things that can turn the day around. The most productive spot on the Sandy seems to be just below the hatchery although it can be a bit of a zoo and mentioning it here will do nothing to ameliorate that situation.

North Coast Fishing Report – Effort and success is increasing for mid-coast offshore salmon fishing. With the huge Columbia River run passing by the mid-coast, action should continue to improve out of Depoe Bay, Pacific City and Garibaldi this weekend. With NW winds often the case for this fishery, it's best to depart your preferred ports and head to the NW in anticipation of riding the wind waves home. It's not slam dunk fishing like it is on the Columbia but anglers should get multiple opportunities for salmon, especially if you get an early start for them on a calm ocean. Action will always be best at the crack of dawn but trollers can strategically drop their baits deeper as the morning progresses. Salmon are likely to follow the bait down deeper as they descend after early morning. Chinook are still a rare catch here unless.....

You target chinook at the mouth of Nehalem Bay. Action on Nehalem should pick up this weekend with ideal hold-over tides and growing returns of wild summer chinook back to the basin. It's also quite clear that several hatchery and wild fish from other systems nose into the lower estuary and are caught by trollers working the mouth during the outgoing tide. High slack and the entire soft outgoing tide should

produce fair to good catches over the weekend. Keep those blue label herring fishing close to the bottom and don't hesitate to scent your bait as you won't be the only one fishing in this area. Trollers should also take some fish in the Wheeler and Nehalem reaches but these areas are best left for the stronger tide series when fish move up the estuary more aggressively. Herring still work best here but anchovies will be a strong alternative bait that other anglers are unlikely to be using.

Bay crabbing should be picking up with the weekend tide series likely to produce fair to good catches for anglers using fresh bait. Tillamook and Nehalem Bays should produce well with Netarts a distant second just because it will receive a lot of pressure this weekend. Crab condition should continue to improve. Ocean crabbing should be excellent but you're still likely to run into a fair number of soft-shelled crab. Again, fresh fish carcasses will produce the best results.

Ocean halibut remains a fair option. You may not catch boat loads of fish but they are a nice grade this time of year. Slow drift large herring, sardines or small chunks of shad in 150 to 170 feet of water, making sure you're fishing within 5 to 10 feet of the bottom. There's a reason these fish are in the "flatfish" family. You may even run across a nice lingcod but be cognizant of your depth as there are restrictions on depth when bottomfishing and halibut fishing.

With river temperatures warming and river levels falling, stream fishing for cutthroat and steelhead will remain quite challenging. Spring chinook action is largely over but regardless of what you're pursuing, you'll have to employ extremely stealthy techniques and fish in the faster, broken surfaced waters if you're upstream of tidewater. Tidewater itself should be a good option for cutthroat, whether you're fly-fishing or trolling. Action could be pretty good for those in the know. The best summer steelhead options will be the Wilson, Nestucca or Three Rivers. As you know, early mornings will be best with the bite fading quickly after sun-up, if you could ever call it a "bite".

The Guide's Forecast – With this ocean forecast:

FRI NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT AT 8 SECONDS. PATCHY DRIZZLE AND FOG IN THE MORNING.

FRI NIGHT NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT... BACKING TO SW AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT AT 8 SECONDS. AREAS OF FOG.

SAT S WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO SW WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT AT 9 SECONDS. CHANCE OF RAIN AND AREAS OF FOG.

SAT NIGHT W WIND 5 KT...VEERING TO NW AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT AT 9 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS AND PATCHY FOG.

SUN NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT.

MON W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

Bar crossings and ocean conditions should be ideal for a great harvest for coho, halibut and bottomfish on the ocean and chinook on the lower Nehalem. Even albacore looks like a strong option for weekend deep sea seekers.

Starting with coho, the low-hanging fruit, troll herring or anchovies for good action from 90 to 180 foot west of your designated port. The earlier you get yourself offshore, the better your action will be as fish bite more aggressively at first light. If you're departing Garibaldi, head north to at least off of Twin Rocks until you find a pocket of fish. If the action is fast, seriously consider working circles around that productive area as you're likely to be fishing on a good school of fish, don't leave them. There seems to

be more "high-finners" south of Cape Falcon but you still have a great chance at a limit of quality hatchery fish. Numbers should continue to grow as we near the end of August.

A soft tide series should allow for effective drifting for deep-running halibut. You should determine which way the ocean current is running (most often from the north to the south this time of year) and slow drift large herring, sardines or squid in 150 to 200 feet of water. It's a pretty random fishery, you're not all that likely to find fish in the same locations you have before as structure is pretty limited in this reach of beach. I have caught some nice halibut in as shallow as 90 foot of water just off of the mouth of the Nehalem; that's not a bad option either.

And speaking of the Nehalem, chinook fishing should be a great option if you're schooled in the fishery that takes place at the mouth. Slow but tight spinning herring will produce fair to good catches of chinook at the bay entrance this weekend and what a perfect opportunity to do some combo halibut and crab fishing too. Be sure to hit high slack but you'll see the bulk of the catch take place on the soft outgoing tide throughout the morning. Use enough lead to ensure your baits are fishing on the bottom and that you don't have to pay out a bunch of line that will tangle other angler's offerings that will be joining you in this fishery. I think it will be an impressive month on this system. Save the upper bay for the heavier tide exchanges but herring should take some biters at Wheeler and maybe Nehalem if you're not comfortable navigating the bar.

Bay crabbing will be a good option this weekend. As we mentioned, Tillamook, Nehalem and Nestucca Estuaries should produce the best results but Netarts should also crab well. Use fresh salmon carcasses to out-crab your competition, don't use halibut carcasses if you run across one. Halibut eat crab, if you get my drift.

If you're stuck fishing inland waters for trout or steelhead, use fluorocarbon line and light leaders. Single beads or eggs or shrimp tails may take a few fish at first light (for steelhead) but trout anglers should stick to small spinners or spoons or fly-fish bright flies in the fast water. Trollers can work large tide-water areas with lake trolls and worms if you want to go old-school. As we mentioned last week, this is an under-tapped fishery.

Central & South Coast Reports – Charters out of Depoe Bay report good coho catches with a decent ratio of hatchery keepers to wild fish which have to be thrown back. As of July 13th, just over 87% of the 80,000-fish hatchery coho quota remained to be caught.

Boats launching out of Newport and Depoe Bay are taking near-limits of rockfish along with good catches of lingcod and lots of ocean crab.

In a bulletin dated today, July 17th, the ODFW announced regarding the Central Oregon Coast Subarea Nearshore Season which opened July 1st to fishing seven days per week. Through July 13, 6,645 pounds had been landed, leaving 15,629 pounds (70%) of the quota remaining. The Summer All-Depth Season—opens August 1-2, if quota remains, will be open every other Friday and Saturday.

As of Wednesday this week, albacore schools out of central Oregon ports had moved far offshore with warm water nearer the beach up north and further south. Unfor-TUNA-te news for anglers who prefer "plugging the boat" at this time of year. In an ironic twist, warm water is closer to shore at ports both north and south of Depoe Bay and Newport.

Regarding catches over the past weekend, the ODFW stated, "Catches averaged from a high of almost eight fish per angler out of Charleston to an average of four fish out of Bandon, Garibaldi and Winchester Bay to less than one fish per angler at Newport and Depoe Bay"

The Oregon Department of Agriculture, which oversees recreational shellfish safety, has continued the closure on mussel harvest coast-wide. All other shellfish harvesting is good to go.

Tuna fishing was decent out of Winchester Bay prior to the push that sent warm water further offshore. Boats returned to port as recently as last weekend with 20 to 50 albacore on board, making Reedsport one of the most productive tuna ports on the coast, albeit briefly. More recently, boats have been doing well for salmon although water temperature has played a role here as well, requiring a longer trip offshore with cooler water near the beach. Limits of ocean salmon are showing up at the cleaning tables accompanied by limits of Dungeness. Winchester Bay has shown a marked improvement for crabbing as well, producing a few limits over the past week although sorting remains necessary to cull softshells. Bay trollers have been hooking salmon near Reedsport. A few boats have taken limits of pinkfin surf perch from the lower Umpqua despite the run winding down. The Umpqua mainstem and South Umpqua have been putting out decent numbers of smallmouth bass despite low water levels. There are some summer steelhead available in the North Umpqua although fishing is reported as only fair.

Salmon fishers launching out of Coos Bay have been taking fair to good catches by trolling herring behind divers over roughly 200 to 230 feet of water. Chinook are being taken occasionally right on the Coos Bay bar. Crabbing continues to improve with several boats taking limits this week.

Trollers hopeful to hook up with the first of the fall Chinook in Rogue Bay have experienced periodic success with anchovy/spinner combinations. From one to six fish have been landed each day over the past week or so. Surf perch fishing has been very good near the mouth of the Rogue River. Spinner flingers have been taking a few early summer steelhead in the lower Rogue but it is, well, early for best results. In addition, warm water temperatures combined with low, clear conditions make enticing a fish a challenge best addressed just prior to sunrise. On the middle Rogue, some early summer steelhead are being caught on streamers, worms and plugs with best results occurring at dusk. Shroeder Park has been productive for anglers using bait. In addition to summer steelheading, spring Chinook fishing remains fair on the upper Rogue from Gold Hill to the hatchery. All manner of lures and bait have been effective at times. As of July 1st, anglers have been able to keep wild Chinook salmon in the Rogue River from Fishers Ferry Boat Ramp to Dodge Bridge but these fish have to be fin-clipped to retain above Dodge Bridge.

Every day that ocean conditions have allowed offshore launches out of the Port of Brookings, salmon are being caught. The fishing has been so good there simply have been no non-productive days. If you're not getting bit in short order, try a slightly different depth. Locals proclaim the Chinook being brought back to port are all Sacramento fish and that the larger variety are yet to arrive. Ooh, this is goin' to be good!

As of July 10th, a surprising 47 percent of the quota remains for the Southern Oregon Subarea halibut fishery (Humbog Mountain to the Oregon-California border). Surprising because this was predicted by one of the southwest Oregon outdoor newspaper writers that it would be over before it got started due to the paltry quota. I guess some things are difficult to predict.

ODFW sez, "Kids 13 and younger can fish for free this Saturday, July 19 at the July Jubilee Free Fishing Event held at Pony Village Mall, North Bend. The jubilee celebrates the anniversary of North Bend.

"Join Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for spinner making and fish identification games. Kids can catch a trout inside the mall, and no fishing poles, bait or licenses are needed. The pond will be set up at the east entrance to the mall near Jo-Ann Fabrics."

Central and Eastern Oregon – As steelhead start to enter the Deschutes, the lower 15 miles of the river will be of interest to those seeking an early encounter. Summers will build in numbers through July with results improving later in the month. Swinging classic wet patterns will be effective. It's summertime

so think Caddis for trout; dries, emergers, nymphs and pupae. Swinging soft hackles will often work when nothing else seems to be doing the trick.

Davis Lake has been producing trout for fly fishers emulating the Callibaetis and midge hatches. Bass fishing has been fair to good.

Downrigger trollers plying Wickiup Reservoir at the 30 to 60 foot range are making a decent dent in the kokanee population. Hoochies and spinners behind dodgers have been effective.

Stocking of Blackwater Rainbow Trout in an effort to reduce East Lake chub populations seems to be working. Hooking a chub at this location is becoming a rare occurrence. Just be certain to release all unclipped rainbows as those are the Blackwaters which are improving this fishery for all of us. And fishing is pretty darned good here.

Kokanee anglers at Odell report fair fishing but seem to be having little trouble taking between a dozen and 20 fish in an outing. Trolling pink lures at 20 to 40-foot depths has produced best here. There is quite an algae bloom in progress now.

Green Peter is producing plenty of kokanee but they are running very small.

The Waterman complex in Crooks County has been ordered to be evacuated due to wildfires. Use extreme caution on the east side as the stretch of dry weather we have been enjoying has made for incendiary conditions.

Write to the TGF staff:

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Random Links

482-pound halibut disqualified from world record:

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/07/15/482-pound-halibut-caught-off-alaska-disqualified-from-world-record/>

Trout Dying To Get a Good Photo: <http://www.bishfish.co.nz/articles/fresh/grip-and-kill.htm>

Whale Driveby (this week): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3OdjeBH_NU

GOOD LUCK!