

The Guide's Forecast - volume 16 issue number 41

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 10th – October 16th, 2014**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro – Only about another 10 days of productive backtrolling for Bonneville anglers. Fish are beginning to turn and action remains sporadic. The wobbler fishery downstream of Portland is effectively over.

Hundreds of coho are crossing Willamette Falls every day now although numbers are a little lower, perhaps the run a little later, than at this time last year. The lower river is fishing well for bass while the Middle Fork is producing steelhead.

Trout fishing is fair on the McKenzie with Caddis patterns. Water conditions are good and the flows are stable.

Fishing remains slow on the Santiams with upper stretches the best bet. Coho should be nosing in but there are better angling destinations.

Coho fishing is decent on the Clackamas which is not only receiving good numbers of fish but they're actually biting this year.

The Sandy River is getting plenty of coho as they can be seen heading upriver at most any time of day. These fish are scattered from the mouth to Cedar Creek.

Northwest – Chinook fishing remains sub-par out of Tillamook but that isn't deterring anglers. The ocean has produced some of the better catches lately but one can fish longer periods of "grass-free" territory out there. The jaws have produced poorly lately. Ocean crabbing out of Tillamook has been productive but closes after October 15th. Bay crabbing has been fair at best with the strong tide series.

A significant rain system is pouring towards the Oregon Coast and some models indicate a good enough rise in river levels to float a boat down in. You won't be alone however. The Trask will be the primary target. The West Channel continues to produce coho but chinook are largely absent.

The Nestucca and Salmon Rivers are slow.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The lower Columbia coho run was recently upgraded and action should remain good for another 10 days. Fresh anchovies will work best but green label herring is also a strong option. Crabbing in the area should improve as tides weaken.

The Cowlitz is producing primarily coho but some chinook are present. Coho, chinook and summer steelhead are all allowed here but this system also receives a lot of the local pressure. Here is a breakdown of the other systems:

Kalama River – Bank anglers on the lower river did well on coho though nearly half the fish were released.

Lewis River – North Fork Lewis bank anglers are primarily catching coho and a few fall Chinook.

Washougal River – Light effort and catch on the lower river.

Drano Lake – No report on angling success. Drano Lake is closed to all fishing from 6 p.m. Tuesdays to 6 p.m. Wednesdays in October.

Southwest- Ocean swells will start to build Saturday and will get big during the coming weekend. Those who are able to launch on Friday this week will be the lucky ones.

Charters out of Depoe Bay and Newport are returning with limits of rockfish, near-limits of ling cod and scores of large ocean crab.

Crabbing has been producing near-limits for boats in Yaquina Bay. Be aware of the change in the weather forecast that's due this weekend if you try it.

Winchester Bay salmon fishers are hooking plenty of salmon but have to release most as they are wild coho, the quota for which closed here shortly after the fishery opened.

Trollers on the lower Coquille and in Coos Bay are boating good numbers of salmon the majority of which are coho. Crabbing is good.

Boats launching out of Gold Beach are catching good numbers of bottom fish. Rogue Bay trollers are catching Chinook while the lower river is productive for steelhead. The middle Rogue is now closed to targeting Chinook while the flies only section of the upper river is fair to good for steelhead.

The Chetco Bobble has been fishing well some days. Not so much others but large fish are being caught when they're on the bite.

Eastern – Despite strong steelhead numbers on the Columbia, they have been slow to move into the Deschutes. Trout fishing has been fair to good on the lower river.

Fly anglers throwing large streamers have been connecting with big bull trout on the Metolius.

Wickiup still has a blue-green algae alert and it appears to be a fairly negative situation.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The Oregon and Washington Departments recently re-calculated the run size for coho. Here is the link to the story Alan Thomas just wrote:

<http://www.columbian.com/news/2014/oct/08/columbia-coho-run-26-percent-larger-forecast/>.

Fishing in Astoria remains excellent but guides reported at mid-week that limits were more challenging to come by. With one of the strongest tide series of the year, that's exactly what I would expect as slow water exchange is productive water and we're on some massive water exchanges. None-the-less, action remains steady and limits are attainable if you're willing to work at it under these conditions. The best action is taking place around the tide exchanges and with the screaming outgoing a.m. tides, it's best to wait out incoming tide that brings with it, cooler water temperatures and more productive fishing.

Spinners remain side-lined while green label herring are taking good numbers of fish. Fresh jigged anchovies will always produce the best and from the reports I'm getting up there, there are some still around and they will produce results.

Upriver, the wobbler fishery continues to fade but some spinner and herring trollers continue to produce some results around Longview. Bonneville backtrollers are entering peak season here but action is far

from consistent. Of the ones you do hook and land, only a small percentage of them will be bright but a fair number will still cut orange. The quality of these fish will fade fast however.

Estuary crabbing is good and will continue to be that way but the strong tides will continue to limit productive time.

The Guide's Forecast – Coho action will remain the best option and with the recent upgrade in run-size, action should stay quite good through mid-month, if not longer. One will have to compete with the gillnets however. Here is the commercial fishery openers:

Season

7 AM to 7 PM Thursday October 9, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Friday October 10, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Wednesday October 15, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Thursday October 16, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Friday October 17, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Wednesday October 22, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Thursday October 23, 2014	(12 hrs)
7 AM to 7 PM Friday October 24, 2014	(12 hrs)

By the middle of next week, tides will begin to soften and the peak of the B run should be underway. Until then, stick to targeting the flood tide, trolling the lower Desdemona Sands tongue, all the way to the bridge as the incoming progresses. We're still several days away from softening tides but by early next week, we should start to see increasing opportunity.

Only die-hards will be trolling and wobbler fishing in the Portland to Longview stretch. Action will be slow. Bonneville backtrollers should still have another 10 days of action but with many fewer fish available (since they're upriver), so goes ample opportunities.

Crabbing won't pick up until early next week although if you pay close attention to your pots and don't let them get sucked under, crabbers should produce excellent results through the weekend. Clam tides start to fade by the weekend but a building swell could put the lid on productive digging by the weekend.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Coho numbers are building rapidly at Willamette Falls. How rapidly? No one knows because when fish are streaming by in the hundreds every day, the counts lag behind. As of today, data is accurate only through September 24th. There are a few numbers which allow for estimated projections as the coho daily count hit 769 on the 29th alone. There are potentially 10,000 coho already upstream which is entirely plausible with several hundred continuing to cross daily.

McKenzie River levels have been good and the flow stable for the past 10 days.

North Santiam level and flows were on the increase early this month, stabilizing on October 5th while there has been virtually no change in the South Santiam this month. The long range forecast from the NOAA indicates only a slight effect from rainfall due mid-October.

The Blueback Chapter of Trout Unlimited will be hosting an International Film Festival on October 11th at the Whiteside Theater in Corvallis. Tickets are \$10 at the door or available in advance at

*www.blueback.org. The curtain rises at 8 PM.

The Oregon Department of fish and Wildlife will host a free family fishing event Saturday, Oct. 11 at St. Louis Ponds near Woodburn from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

ODFW sez, "Tagged trout, including some with \$50 prize tags, have been released into Henry Hagg Lake as part of a study to evaluate the trout stocking program. Information collected from tags can be submitted online at the tag-reporting page

(http://dfw.state.or.us/RR/fish_tag_return/hagg_lake.asp)."

The Guide's Forecast – With those big, big numbers at the Falls, there are certainly coho gathering at the mouths of the Tualatin, Yamhill, Molalla and Santiam Rivers. **Robert Campbell at Fisherman's Marine in Oregon City (503-557-5600)** has predicted this over the past couple of weeks but reminds anglers that the action won't pick up until the water temperature of those tributaries drops somewhat. Rain will ameliorate the problem but too much rain will draw them upstream. Hit the mouths with spinners and hope to be there at the right moment. As the seasons change, foliage becomes more colorful and with over 22,000 summer steelhead upstream, fly rodders on the Middle Fork are having their way with them against a spectacular backdrop. These fish are more active and "bitey" with the water temperature lower thanks to cooler overnight weather. Hardware anglers are scoring as well, particularly with spinners at many likely locations below Dexter Dam. There are plenty of stretches which hold fish that are accessible by boat or bank.

Stick to Caddis patterns for trout on the McKenzie River. While there are a few late summer steelhead around, few is an accurate word to use to describe the population. For anadromous fishes, try elsewhere.

The upper stretches of the North Santiam from Mehama to Packsaddle Park continue to hold the best promise of a hookup but it has been slow and there are certainly better choices at this time of year. First light bite is often the only bite of the day here. There will undoubtedly be a few coho entering the Santiams but it remains to be seen if they'll bite and, if so, whether they'll be in a condition to keep. Stay tuned.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Coho are entering the low, stable waters of the Clackamas because, as we've said before, these fish move by the calendar and will not be held back by skinny water. According to **Robert Campbell at Fisherman's Marine in Oregon City (503-557-5600)**, the difference this year is that they are biting. One of the effects is cars lined up for half a mile both ways at Bonnie Lure.

The Sandy River is getting good numbers of coho as well. They can be seen moving in an upstream every day around the mouth and in the lower river. Access the river near Cedar Creek has become difficult.

The Guide's Forecast – "The Clackamas is stuffed with coho," **Robert Campbell at Fisherman's Marine in Oregon City (503-557-5600)**, told TGF over the telephone today, "like we haven't seen in 15 or 20 years". Campbell went on to say they are in the river in good number from the mouth to Eagle Creek and people are catching them. Top lures include #4 Blue Fox spinners in purple, pink and chartreuse and Twitchin' Jigs. Cured eggs either drifted or fished under a bobber are also effective. What we are experiencing right now is just about the peak of the run, he said, although coho will continue to be taken through October.

"The Sandy has good numbers of fish from the mouth up to Cedar Creek" according to **Robert Campbell at Fisherman's Marine in Oregon City (503-557-5600)**. If there's a trick to catching them, he went on, it's to find fish that haven't been harassed. "Find a stretch of water that holds fish people haven't been hammering on," he advises, "cause those are the one that will bite." Plugs such as Wiggle Warts have been effective pulling fish out of the river from Revenue Bridge to the mouth while eggs or spinners are more effective up around Cedar Creek according to Campbell.

Rain is on the way, and with it, a modest change in the Clack and Sandy. According to forecasts, this will be nothing dramatic, at least not yet. It will very likely have a more profound effect on the coho than it does on the river levels. Slivers will be on the move, and likely to enter hatchery tributaries in significant numbers for the first time this season. Fishing is likely to be good while parking and access will become even more difficult.

North Coast Fishing Report – Tillamook chinook remain sparse compared to what most of us had hoped. In recent days, the fishing around the middle bay has slowed, particularly around Ray's Place Piling (the old "corral") and the intricate series of slots between Bay City and Ray's Place. Unless you have these areas marked off on your GPS, they are challenging to navigate and maintain yourself in the channel. It's a moot point now as the heavy tides, heavy grass and seaweed and a friendly ocean is keeping many biters from even entering the estuary. The middle bay and Ray's Place had been one of the better bets for spinner trollers late last week and over the weekend with some guide boats posting 3 to 5 chinook days working that area. The Ghost Hole and Bay City was producing an occasional fish but the strong tides have inundated it with leafy debris for much of this week. It may be a while before we see clean fishing conditions in the estuary.

A friendly ocean has kept herring trollers optimistic about opportunity in recent days. Calm seas have enabled anglers to work the south side of the south jetty and outside of the sunken jetty to the green can, tallying numerous coho and an occasional chinook. The chinook bite was good on Tuesday but tapered a bit by Wednesday. The seaweed was not too bad out there and the seas were very fun to fish on. The strong incoming tide however creates quite a sweeping current around the tip of the south jetty and several boats have been swept across the sunken jetty, snagging their gear up and endangering their lives in an attempt to retrieve it. This is THE most dangerous area on the bar and boaters need to stay away from this area at ALL times. That said, there were fish caught in this immediate area (although NEVER worth risking your life for if you're not comfortable fishing this area). The coho to chinook ratio on Wednesday was 1 chinook for every 2 coho; ironic that the limit for chinook is 2 per person/day and the limit on ocean coho is 0.....There are very few hatchery coho left in the estuary but there are a few. Many of the coho we're catching are large and although I don't know of anyone getting a ticket for misidentification, it's likely to happen given the size of some of these brutes. Be diligent in your identification.

The upper bay is fishing fair at best. Typically, this set of strong tides is good for upper bay anglers but the fact that ocean trollers (sport) are taking many of the (few) biters that are present, doesn't allow for upper bay anglers to find high success. Seaweed is also an issue on these strong tides.

Tidewater anglers are reporting the best success in the Trask River but action here has waned in recent days. The strong tides likely have something to do with it. A fair number of these fish are turning dark but there should be some bright ones moving in on this strong tide series. Other tidewater systems in the Tillamook area are less than impressive. Deeper holes upriver of tidewater are holding some dark fish; they are not very willing to bite and we shouldn't be pursuing them anyway.

To the north, Nehalem anglers continue to do good for coho although a good push of chinook was witnessed by some anglers on Wednesday. With the stronger tides, trollers are finding higher success rates higher in the system. Wheeler and Nehalem both have been producing consistent coho (wild) catches with some brief periods of chinook action. Bait continues to take a bulk of the catch here but spinners have been fairly effective too. Downsize spinners if you're targeting the more abundant coho. This fishery should start to slow down for chinook especially.

With chinook numbers clearly down from expectations, the Nestucca fishery is underperforming as well. Trollers are taking some fish in tidewater and bobber and bait tossers are having a hard time effectively

fishing during the strong tide exchange. The Nestucca's sister river, the Salmon, is dropping off for fresh fish. There are good numbers scattered in the deeper holes upriver of tide however. It's spawning time!

On the shellfish scene, crabbing has been tough on the estuaries but ocean crabbing has been good. With a calm sea, fresh bait and an overnight soak, I haven't had any trouble getting 48 keeper crab limits for my people in recent days. I have been crabbing just outside of Tillamook Bay in about 38 to 40 foot of water with fresh salmon carcasses. Although we do have to measure some of the keepers, there are still good numbers of dinner-plate sized, hard shelled crabs out there too. Previous reports seem to have most folks dis-interested but there's only a few days left of the season and an even shorter window of opportunity given the upcoming storm fronts.

Clam diggers working the minus tide series along Clatsop Beaches have been pleased with their return on investment in recent digs. With a calm surf and a long rest, clams were readily available at mid-week. Good action should continue for a few more days.

The Guide's Forecast – Ocean trollers have just another day or so before conditions turn rough. With the strong tides, it's really the best bet. Seaweed continues to be a problem on these strong tides for bay trollers and will likely continue to be problematic into next week. Be prepared to only effectively fish for about ½ of your day on Tillamook Bay. Remember that any coho are options on Fridays and Saturdays only. With the ocean turning as early as Saturday, we'll likely be locked in the bay after Saturday. We'll be greeted at daylight with a moderate outgoing tide, which will likely have a good bunch of seaweed associated with it. The best bet will likely be around low slack along the jetties trolling herring. If you can safely fish outside (ocean), that's what you'll want to do.

Here is the offshore forecast:

THU

N WIND 5 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT AT 9 SECONDS.

THU NIGHT

N WIND 5 KT...BACKING TO NW AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 18 SECONDS.

FRI

W WIND TO 5 KT...BECOMING SW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 16 SECONDS. CHANCE OF RAIN.

FRI NIGHT

SW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING W 5 TO 10 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT AT 16 SECONDS... BUILDING TO 5 FT AT 20 SECONDS AFTER MIDNIGHT. RAIN LIKELY.

SAT

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 8 FT AT 19 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT NIGHT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 12 FT. CHANCE OF RAIN.

SUN

SW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 12 FT.

MON

W WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 6 FT. W SWELL 12 FT.

Most anglers will be targeting the incoming tide, trying to intercept biters at the Ghost Hole, Bay City and Ray's Place piling as the bay fills in. Spinners may continue to be the go-to option but if the water cools below 60 degrees, herring should turn back on. The ocean finally cooled to 55 degrees on Tuesday and Wednesday so things may be turning back to normal around Tillamook Bay. It's unusual but spinners have been taking significant numbers of fish in the upper reaches lately. It's been fun going back to the. What's frustrating is that there is no one color that has been consistent lately. Red/whites or copper/red-tip works fine one day and the chartreuse/green dot is producing the better bites the next. These later returning fish do seem to be shying away from solid colors recently. The silver/reds or silver/pinks have been producing well lately but that could change in the conditions remain foggy/rainy. We really won't get much of a reprieve from strong tides until the middle of next week.

Ocean trollers would fare best working the south side of the south jetty and along the sunken jetty to the green can. There hasn't been much effort on the North side of the bay entrance; likely because there seem to be a lot more coho present for the few chinook that are being caught over there. Please realize that these ocean forecasts can change at any time so be sure to check from our home page before heading out.

I don't anticipate the tidewater fishery to improve anytime soon but river anglers could witness some opportunity by early next week. Rivers won't be a strong option over the weekend however. Here is the future forecast for the Wilson River:



It won't take much rain to inspire Trask River chinook and the rare hatchery coho that is yet to come. A 1/2 foot rise could do the trick but fish will likely remain finicky.

The Nehalem Bay should continue to be a good producer for wild coho. There are certainly plenty of them around and the strong tide series should provide the fishery with more biters. Troll small herring or hot-colored spinners for your best chance in the Wheeler/Nehalem reach. Once the rains hit, this fishery will crash. Chinook action should also slow as we near mid-month.

The Nestucca will be the better option between that and the Salmon River. Salmon River chinook are turning but fresh fish should continue to move into the Nestucca system, especially in anticipation for a heavy rain.

Bay crabbing will continue to challenge but Tillamook and Nehalem should be the top two options. Razor clam diggers should still have good tides into the weekend but proper digging will require a flashlight and a constant eye on the crashing surf when it comes up.

Central & South Coast Reports – Charters out of Depoe Bay and Newport are returning with limits of rockfish, near-limits of ling cod and scores of large ocean crab.

The Central Coast Nearshore Halibut Fishery will continue with 29% remaining in the quota. South coast halibut remains open as this fishery is relying on quota overages from other areas.

Boats are still launching for tuna and still catching. Warm water is fairly close to the beach out of central Oregon ports and the pursuit is taking place today and will undoubtedly continue on Friday. Once the low pressure front comes on and the weather changes in the coming week it could sound a death knell for albacore fishing in 2014. On the other hand, if warm water sticks around, tuna fishing could continue into November.

Ocean swells will start to build Saturday and will get big during the coming weekend. Those who are able to launch on Friday this week will be the lucky ones.

Crabbing has been producing near-limits for boats in Yaquina Bay. Be aware of the change in the weather forecast that's due this weekend if you try it.

Several limits of coho were taken on the lower Siuslaw over the past weekend and it is still fishing well this week. From the Highway 101 Bridge upriver to the stretch above Cushman, people are catching fish. Fresh coho are moving in daily but haven't been moving upstream due to low water. A few Chinook are also being taken on herring or spinners although the latter is responsible for the majority of the coho hookups. Needless to say, it would benefit anglers to arrive early to take advantage of this fishery.

While Siltcoos Lake opened for coho on October 1st, those fish are yet to show as the water temperatures are in the high 60s. There have been some sea-run cutthroat trout taken recently. It is hoped that when coho eventually enter with rainfall here as well as Tahkenitch and Tenmile that they'll still be bright enough to keep.

Winchester Bay salmon trollers are taking decent numbers of Chinook which are coming in daily, providing a good target of large, bright fish. Crabbing has been good. The Umpqua River has been productive for salmon but most are wild coho which have to be released. There was a quota for unclipped silver here which filled shortly after the season opened. Those who stick with it are taking a few Chinook.

Trollers dragging cut-plug herring have been catching decent numbers of Chinook and coho in Coos Bay although pressure for them has been lightening up lately. Best results are coming between the Highway 101 Bridge and the mouth of the Millicoma River. Crabbing has been good, yielding limits of near-limits for boaters. Clamming has been outstanding around Charleston with minus tides this week.

Trollers working Coquille tidewater have been connecting with coho big time over the past few days. Up past Rocky Point dragging a herring behind a flasher has been producing limits with regularity.

With Chinook regularly topping 25 and 30 pounds, boaters have been willing to spin the wheel on the Chetco Bubble fishery as it has run the gamut from poor to great to fair on day to the next. The promise of larger-than-average salmon keeps 'em coming back. At the opener on October 1st, the first three Chinook entered in Sporthaven Marina's Ocean Hawg Derby were 36, 37 and 38 1/2 pounds. That's a pretty good indication of why this fishery is so highly-anticipated every year. Trolling a whole baitfish, either anchovy or herring, is de rigueur for these big Chinook. Reports indicate most fish are being hooked at just 10 to 30 foot depths and that these fish haven't schooled so boats can't just line them up and knock them down. First light results have been best but be aware this fishery is only open until October 12th. Trollers in Chetco tidewater have been scoring some nice Chinook as have bobber & bait anglers fishing upriver.

Bottom fishing out of Gold Beach has been excellent for colorful rockfish, good-sized ling cod and plenty of ocean crab in good condition. Regarding the salmon fishery in Rogue Bay, the Curry Coastal Pilot referred to it as "one of their finest seasons in over a decade." With good numbers of both Chinook and coho in the bay, there's certainly no shortage of action. Chinook bound for Indian Creek are hitting just above the Highway 101 Bridge, creating the primary fishery in the estuary now. Be aware that some coho are being misidentified as Chinook when they top 20 pounds. Be sure of your fish ID to avoid an expensive fishing trip. Steelheaders on the lower Rogue have continued to score adults and half-pounders with the bonus of jacks on occasion. The middle Rogue is strictly a steelhead fishery as Chinook fishing is closed. The Flies-only upper river is fair to good for steelhead despite low water flows.

With the water temperatures dropping, trout fishing has picked up somewhat at Diamond Lake although fish are hanging around at the mouths of creeks where they were planted. Bait fishing is taking the greater numbers of fish.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Despite strong steelhead numbers on the Columbia, they have been slow to move into the Deschutes. They're coming but it'll be a late arrival this year. The best population remains in the lower river. Counts of Chinook have improved and are steady at Sherars Falls. Steelhead counts remain only fair. Cooler water temperatures have fish on the move and moving fish are far more likely to bite or strike. Fishing for reddsides has been pretty good on the lower Deschutes with best results coming on Caddis patterns early and late in the day.

Despite few anglers trying it, the Wallowa River is kicking out some dandy trout on October Caddis nymphs.

Fly anglers throwing large streamers have been connecting with big bull trout on the Metolius.

Despite it being so the season, Odell Lake has continued to produce limits of kokanee to trollers. Some are showing color which makes culling a necessity but most are still bright.

At last report, Wickiup still has a blue-green algae alert and it appears to be a fairly negative situation.

Write to the TGF staff:

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Random Links

Albacore Fly Fishing Action:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7HTLYQaQ_o&list=UUqbUkYg_DJnyX89-fXcJTBw

Swing the Fly Online Magazine:

<http://www.joomag.com/magazine/swing-the-fly-issue-22-fall-2014/0059431001408378421>

"Holy grail" of boat motors?:

<http://www.3news.co.nz/Southland-inventors-revolutionise-boat-propeller-system/tabid/369/articleID/268643/Default.aspx>

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity." -Lucius Anneus Seneca

GOOD LUCK!