

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 31st – November 6th, 2014**

Willamette Valley/Metro – With the gorge chinook fishery winding down, anglers are already looking ahead to spring chinook. Fall coho remain an option, especially this year, with the expanded run size we're currently seeing. Coho numbers continue to impress over Bonneville Dam and should continue to provide good sport in fisheries such as the mouth of the Klickitat. What typically was a great time to sturgeon fish in the gorge has gone to the birds, likely due to the predation of adult sturgeon by the Stellar Sea Lions.

Coho counts are starting to drop at Willamette Falls with early 17,500 upstream now. Flows are increasing while visibility is predictably dropping with upstream mud and debris being transported down with the current.

McKenzie River level and flow predictably increased with rainfall although the level has been dropping again this week.

North and South Santiam river water levels are high and will remain that way through much of the coming week.

Northwest – Tillamook continues to march on with chinook still being taken at Bay City and to a lesser degree, the Ghost Hole. It seems a stronger than usual showing of late season chinook could provide opportunity well into December. Action is far from lights out but it certainly justifies sometime in the lower bay.

Area rivers produced well under last week's ideal conditions. Fair numbers of chinook were reported from the Wilson River with the Kilchis, Trask and Nestucca systems a fair option also. If water conditions persist, this could be a peak week for fresh chinook on north coast river systems. The Salmon River is essentially over.

The Alsea and Siletz systems also have chinook available but ample amounts of rain has sent a bunch of the run upstream.

The lower Columbia will largely become recreational sport crabbing grounds over the next 6 weeks. Catches are fair but could improve when stronger tides subside.

Central & South Coast Reports - Winter storms have hampered offshore fishing. Deepwater fishing for rockfish and ling cod without restriction as to fathom lines, will continue throughout wintertime.

With rainfall pushing coastal river levels up earlier this week, there was talk of early winter steelheading but it's still a little too early.

Reports from the Alsea indicate good numbers of fish although they are well upriver now. Crabbing is still holding up at Winchester Bay where boats continue to take limits or near-limits of Dungeness. Bank anglers are taking the occasional Chinook casting spinners.

Precipitation hasn't shut down crabbing in a bay as large as the Coos as boats are still taking limits. The Coos River is closed for trout fishing as of November 1.

High water has brought an end to fishing in Rogue Bay. Fishing has been fair on the middle Rogue where

there was far less effect from the recent freshet. The upper river has been slow with stretches allowing bait, lures or both November 1. Check you regulations.

Estuary trolling is pretty much a done deal in Brookings Harbor with the first heavy seasonal rainfall. The Chetco opens above River Mile 2,2 on November 4th. Special regulations apply.

One report from the Sixes River indicated moderate boat traffic and some chinook caught although its quite early for this fishery to really be productive.

Fishing at Diamond Lake has been slow this week with wind hampering efforts.

Central & Eastern – A mid-week check showed no boats at the mouth of the Deschutes. Steelheading is slow to fair, trout fishing is a bit better.

There is very little pressure on the Wallowa River where anglers are taking the occasional steelhead

Rainfall has improved results for steelhead on the Imnaha River.

SW Washington- The Cowlitz remains the bright spot in the district with catch rates nearing 2 fish per person, including fish released over the last week.

The Kalama and Lewis Rivers are also giving up impressive numbers of coho and chinook remain an option in the Lewis as well.

Drano Lake interest is waning but anglers working the mouth of the Klickitat are still producing good numbers of coho and action likely to remain strong if you go by dam counts.

Soapbox Update: Do you have your seats secured for the Association of NW Steelheaders 26th annual Hall of Fame Banquet on November 15th? This is the big one with lots of great auction items and a great program that highlights all the good things our association does for NW sports anglers. Go to the Steelheaders web site and secure your seats now. The Association would also LOVE to have any wonderful donations you're able to provide. You can contact us through the web site with all your creative ideas. Thank you!

<http://nwsteelheaders.org/events/hall-of-fame/>

Columbia River Fishing Report – With only the estuary remaining somewhat live in the system, salmon fishing is theoretically over. Anglers have largely folded up here as the bulk of the run has taken advantage of water in the tributaries.

With coho counts remaining strong at Bonneville however, the spinner trolling fishery for coho in the gorge may remain a good option. It's an under tapped fishery but those that know where to go and what to do, are catching fall coho (both hatchery and wild) on the shallower sand flats of the middle gorge (Camas to Horsetail Falls).

Crabbing will be the primary focus of the lower Columbia now.

Check regulations as most fisheries remain open through the end of the month.

The Guide's Forecast – A fairly moderate tide exchange could provide some fair action for crab seekers. Other than that, the estuary has dried up.

Further upriver, coho trollers using spinners should find some success in the gorge. Sand flats around what used to be Skamania Island and Lady Island should produce results into mid-November. It's clear from viewing fish passage at Bonneville, the bulk of the run is upriver.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Coho counts are starting to drop at Willamette Falls with early 17,500 upstream now. Flows are increasing while visibility is predictably dropping with upstream mud and debris being transported down with the current.

McKenzie River level and flow predictably increased with rainfall although the level has been dropping again this week.

North and South Santiam river water levels are high and will remain that way through much of the coming week.

The Guide's Forecast – Angling opportunities on the lower Willamette are somewhat limited but that doesn't mean there isn't a chance for some decent fishing. Walleye are still on the bite in Multnomah Channel. Rising water may put them off for a while but if so, there should be additional opportunities in the near future. On the other hand, and as we have said in the past, sturgeon love high, muddy water and fishing for them has been good. Most of the downriver holes are productive now with baits of herring or squid. Sure, it's all catch and release but the action is fairly steady and the fish are good-sized. Above the falls, there should be coho still hanging around the mouths of the Tualatin, Yamhill, Molalla and Santiam rivers, some of these fish will have moved into the tribs with the recent freshet.

There's not much of interest to anglers occurring on the McKenzie at this time of year. Trout fishers might hit some BWO hatches in this weather.

The Santiams aren't going to fish for a while. When the water drops and clears, there may be a few coho around but it's a bit of a long shot here.

There are some coho up the South Yamhill in the Sheridan/Willamina stretch which would be fun to catch on spinners. While it's legal to keep up to three wild fish here, they will probably be too dark to consider doing so. Halloween will be about your only chance to try as the river closes November 1.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas levels rose and fell in waves over the past week. It's has dropped back down at this writing mid-day on October 30th but is forecast to start rising on Friday this week, and to be dropping again over the coming weekend.

At mid-week, the Sandy River was running muddy. The good news is that there are still coho available and water conditions have been improving.

The Guide's Forecast – If the Clackamas water level is dropping this weekend as predicted, there will be fish to be caught. The determining factor will be how much it drops and water clarity. It may not drop and clear sufficiently to fish well until the coming week and even at that, it isn't supposed to get down to the optimum 12-foot level at Estacada before it starts rising again. Spinners will still trick some coho on the Clackamas but expect to be fishing over a mix of bright and dark fish now. Eagle Creek would be a logical area to try but finding a spot to park, let alone fish, will undoubtedly be a challenge. There will be another push of coho in November but these will be mostly unclipped fish. Water conditions are improving and will only get better over the coming weekend.

Coho fishing has been pretty good on the Sandy at times this week. It has been mostly a catch-and-release fishery as the vast majority are wild fish now. Try drifting yarn in red or yellow, corkies or brightly-colored spinners.

Three adult salmon or steelhead in combination are allowed per day in the Clackamas including Eagle Creek and the Sandy River but at least one of those must be an adipose fin-clipped coho through December 31st.

North Coast Fishing Report – Tillamook remains the chinook stronghold with a fair number of salmon showing for the late season. Late season fishing the last few years has been less than impressive. It looks as if November may be a productive month after all. Most recently, chinook action at Bay City has been consistent, likely due to increased water volumes attracting fish to the east side of the bay again. The Ghost Hole largely remains a mystery as fish seem to be biting better at Bay City. I had my best day of the season, marking 7 chinook with surprisingly no coho in the catch on Sunday. Association of NW Steelheader volunteers Doug Hunt and Pat Bauer took early limits of chinook dragging herring near low tide. The Bay City bite has produced best close to low slack and the first part of incoming tide. Ghost Hole trollers quip about challenging catch rates but first light seems to be producing some results. It's just too weird that fish would be biting at Bay City and not the Ghost Hole. No other reach of the estuary is producing consistent results. The ocean has remained closed for weeks.

Anglers fishing the rivers have reported great results over the last 10 days. Although the fishing has slowed in recent days, frequent limits were reported on the Wilson from Mills Bridge downstream into tidewater areas. As is commonly the case, the best fishing will occur on the front portion of the rain freshet as fish will have been stacked up, waiting for such high water opportunity. Driftboaters working downstream of Mills Bridge to the Sollie Smith take-out, reported fish, "in every hole." Backbounced eggs and plugs have been most effective but the technique largely depends on river traffic and water height. Anglers working the tidewater have a bit more leeway anchor fishing when conditions allow. The best anchoring scenarios happen when flows are up and fish are on the move. Regardless of flow, the first hour of daybreak is always the most productive. Last week, bouncers working downstream of Sollie Smith did well but action has dramatically slowed by Thursday. Many reported the upper reaches of tidewater around the highway 101 Bridge as crowded. Not surprising given the ideal conditions.

Trask River anglers are reporting mediocre results. It looks as if a smaller return this year than last is largely to blame. Trask River anglers certainly have experienced some great fishing but action has tapered dramatically in the recent week. Although there certainly are more fish to come, the bulk of the run has likely entered this tributary fishery.

Chum are starting to show and coho remain prevalent so be aware of respective regulations regarding the two species. On most of the Tillamook district streams, coho retention is allowed to the Highway 101 Bridge on Friday's and Saturdays. The Tillamook River is an exception however, it's Burton Bridge there (which is pretty low in tidewater). Chum should start to enter in better numbers well into November but this remains a catch and release fishery only. The Kilchis, Miami and Wilson are the best bets if this fishery materializes.

Nestucca River anglers have reported fair success from the driftboats but like most north coast systems, the expectations were greater than the realities. Anglers are reminded that the fishery is closed above 1st Bridge. With less pressure on this system, backtrollers and effectively work plugs and shrimp and egg combinations with success.

Crabbing remains challenging in the estuaries. With the recent freshwater influx and a sub-par season in the first place, crabbers have been struggling for limits.

Razor clam digging last weekend wasn't worth much as high surf kept clams from feeding near the surface. It's a rough time of year to expect good digging conditions.

The Guide's Forecast – Chinook anglers will remain focused on the Tillamook district with the Wilson and Kilchis runs the primary focus on late season success. Tillamook Bay success doesn't seem to be driven by water levels as low slack and the first part of incoming tides have consistently produced since the rains arrived.

The east side of the bay along the Ghost Hole and Bay City should continue to consistently produce through early December. With mediocre tides and consistent flow coming from the rivers, anglers should continue to expect fair opportunity trolling herring from just before low slack, through the first part of incoming tide. As the incoming tide increases, anglers could be a little more liberal as to how far their baits are off the bottom. It would be wise to vary depths as the tide comes in. The bottom of the bay will certainly be a consistent bet but fish will stratify higher in the water column as high tide inundates the estuary.

The West Channel may still be an option but don't invest too much time in this fishery as it hasn't produced great results all season (at least for chinook). Keep in mind with the Wilson and Kilchis fish making up the largest component of the Tillamook run right now, the east side of the estuary will likely continue to produce the best results.

The Nehalem systems is largely done with. There should still be waves of wild coho coming through on occasion but it may become a needle in a haystack fishery. Although conditions are good for fishing on the little North Fork and hatchery coho are present, they're not too willing to sacrifice themselves for the common angler.

Driftboaters working the Nestucca, Trask, Alsea and Siletz systems will likely come across a mix of fresh and dark chinook. The Kilchis and Wilson should produce the highest quality chinook over the weekend with high flows keeping fresh fish moving into the system. The tidewater reaches of these rivers will likely produce some of the better opportunities but with consistent high flows, bank anglers working the upper reaches should also have some fair opportunity.

Crabbing in Tillamook Bay will be challenging.

Central & South Coast Reports – Winter storms have hampered offshore fishing. At least one business, Dockside Charters located in Depoe Bay, plans to be closed most of November. You can bet with a break in the weather, they'll be willing to make a trip for lings and rockfish.

Deepwater fishing for rockfish and ling cod without restriction as to fathom lines, will continue throughout wintertime.

And yeah, those with albacore fever are trying to figure out whether or not offshore conditions will allow just one more trip for tuna.

While ocean crabbing is closed until the 1st of December, bay crabbing is good and November is considered one of the best months of the year.

With rainfall pushing coastal river levels up earlier this week, there was talk of early winter steelheading but it's still a little too early for optimism. Usually, the first fish is taking in mid-November.

Rainfall turned on fishing at Siltcoos Lake where good numbers of coho were hooked by trollers near the outlet earlier this week. Fishing has slowed somewhat in the past few days.

Reports from the Alsea indicate good numbers of fish although they are well upriver now.

Crabbing at Florence was slow on Wednesday this week with mostly undersized showing in tidewater net and traps. Spoons and spinners were effective in taking some good-sized coho at the Siuslaw River on Wednesday this week.

Crabbing is still holding up at Winchester Bay where boats continue to take limits or near-limits of Dungeness. Bank anglers are taking the occasional Chinook casting spinners at Osprey Point. Upriver, the Chinook season is winding down on the Umpqua system and most of the fish dark now, interest has waned. There are coho in the river but only fin-clips and jacks may be kept and the majority are wild. The river is in pretty crummy condition now, muddy and fluctuating.

While Coos Bay remains open for Chinook and coho, rain earlier this week sent salmon upriver so most anglers are waiting for the winter steelhead season to start. Precipitation hasn't shut down crabbing in a bay as large as the Coos as boats are still taking limits. The Coos River is closed for trout fishing as of November 1.

The Coquille River was fishing very well for salmon just prior to the storm front which passed through late last week. Coho outnumbered Chinook about 15 to one but the coho were up to 20 pounds. The water has returned to pre-storm levels but it remains to be seen if there are enough salmon to repopulate the lower river.

High water has brought an end to fishing in Rogue Bay. With the river still high, plunking has been the option for those trying to catch salmon or steelhead. Another rise is expected this weekend with the forecast indicating a falling river on Sunday, November 2nd. Fishing has been fair on the middle Rogue where there was far less effect from the recent freshet. That will change this weekend, however with the level taking a sharp jump this coming Saturday according to NOAA forecasts. Beginning November 1, lures and bait as well as flies may be used upstream of the Shady Cove boat ramp to Cole Rivers Hatchery. Also beginning November 1, from Fishers Ferry boat ramp upstream to the Shady Cove boat ramp, lures as well as flies can be used. Fishing in this stretch of the Rogue has been slow recently.

Estuary trolling is pretty much a done deal in Brookings Harbor with the first heavy seasonal rainfall. Despite that last storm increasing flows from 400 cfs to well over 14,500 cfs, the ODFW did not open the upper Chetco early and is sticking by the scheduled November 4th opener at which time anglers may chase Chinook above River Mile 2.2. From the power line crossing at river mile 2.2 upstream to Nook Creek, only fly angling and bobber fishing is allowed and with only one single-point hook. Fly gear has to include a strike indicator and bobber fishing must consist of a bobber and a leader no longer than 36 inches. The Chetco is currently 2,500 cfs and rising, forecast to hit 4,500 cfs or greater flow over the coming weekend. Fish the bends where Chinook will be holding now that they have moved out of tidewater. Chinook will stay in the mainstem until they spawn in Chetco tributaries in late November or December.

One report from the Sixes River indicated moderate boat traffic and some chinook caught although its quite early for this fishery to really be productive. It will certainly start to shine in a month or so. According the commercial boats staged off the mouth of the Elk River, numbers of Chinook are down this year.

Fishing at Diamond Lake has been slow this week with wind hampering efforts. Despite the less than stellar results, there seems to be quite a bit of boat pressure.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Trout are taking midges around Mecca on the Deschutes. A few steelhead are being hooked on the lower Deschutes but that seems to be the problem with steelheading this year - few steelhead. The White River cleared on Wednesday this week as has the Deschutes below it.

While wind can be problematic at times, when it dies down a bit the Crooked River has been fishing well with Blue-Winged Olives hatching. It will be turning cold here soon.

There is very little pressure on the Wallowa River where anglers are taking the occasional steelhead but experiencing better results for large rainbow trout and a few bull trout.

Rainfall has improved results for steelhead on the Imnaha River.

Steelheading has also improved on the Grande Ronde River with extra flow thanks to recent rainfall.

Much of the trout water closes at the end of October. Be sure to check the regulations. Some options remaining open will be Lake Billy Chinook and Crescent Lake, both of which fish well over the winter months.

Reader Emails: The Inbox

Subscriber Dan O. reports, "I fished Oct. 22nd at Siltcoos, and caught a 6 lb male Coho trolling a hot pink wiggle wart, which I released. The fish was caught at the mouth of Fiddle creek. I did not see any fish rolling, and had no success throwing spinners at the lake outlet. The fish I did catch was starting to turn dark. I fished Tahkenitch the Sunday before that, with no success."

Write to the TGF staff:

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Random Links

Port Orford storm damage:

<http://www.currypilot.com/News/Local-News/County-seeks-states-help>

Hank Patterson's 8 Steps To Better Nymph Fishing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5m0QbVTWhtw>

A little rough offshore:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=FtIHM2Xfuqq

GOOD LUCK!