

The Guide's Forecast - volume 7 issue number 4

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 29th – August 4th 2005**

Fisheries Update: Prepare yourself for the most popular fishery of the year with The Guide's Forecast tech report on Buoy 10 fishing. Tech report #4, titled ***Columbia River Estuary Salmon Fishing*** is a 10 page detailed report on how to make the most of your time in pursuit of these fish. Tides, weather and location are critical when deciding how to tackle this immense body of water and this tech report tells you how the professionals do it. Order yours today **before** the season gets underway. Go to: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml> and check out our other reports to help guide you into Oregon's treasures!

Oregon Fishing Report

A bulletin from the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife on July 26th announced the **ocean salmon season will expand** to seven days a week starting Friday, July 29th, from Cape Falcon (near Manzanita) North into Washington State.

And not so good news for Columbia River anglers, the Departments released in-river gillnet season dates for fall fish. They are as follows:

NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERY

DATES:

7 PM Thursday August 4 to 7AM Wednesday August 5 (12 hours)
7 PM Sunday August 7 to 7 AM Monday August 8 (12 hours)
7 PM Tuesday August 9 to 7 AM Wednesday August 10 (12 hours)
7 PM Thursday August 11 to 7 AM Friday August 12 (12 hours)

AREA: Zones 1 –5

SANCTUARIES: Grays River, Elokomin-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A, Lewis-A, Washougal and Sandy Rivers.

GEAR: 8" minimum and 9 3/4 maximum mesh size restrictions.

ALLOWABLE SALE: Salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of five white or green sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participation vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday), that the fishery is open. The five sturgeon possession and sales limit includes both mainstem and Select Area fisheries.

Now do you know why I am not so excited to start my guided fishing trips until the 15th of August?

Since conditions offshore have prevented many anglers from trying, the catches have been light, prompting the all-day, every-day fishery. Two coho or chinook may be retained per angler per day although coho must be of hatchery origin to keep. Chinook must measure 24 inches or better while fin-clipped coho over 16 inches may be kept. Anglers are allowed to retain 2 salmon- either 2 fin-clipped coho or 2 Chinook or 1 of each!

The **Cape Falcon to Tillamook Head** area closes to salmon fishing on August 1st. Cape Falcon to Humberg Mountain just north of Gold Beach closes to fin-clipped coho on July 31st. It remains open to Chinook however.

Summer chinook are starting to show at **Nehalem Bay** with a few caught over the last week or so. In a week or two the conga line of trollers will be catching decent numbers of fish.

Sturgeon fishing was good last week at **Tillamook Bay** with many keepers taken. There's another minus tide series the first week of August which should offer additional opportunities in the early morning hours. Use mud shrimp if available, sand shrimp otherwise. See Marie at Tillamook bait for additional tips on taking these rod-benders.

Anchor fishermen on the **Columbia**, hopeful for summer chinook, are taking a surprising number of summer steelhead. While the majority of these are wild, there are fair numbers of hatchery fish in the mix. Salmon fishing, however, is slow. Algae continues to foul gear, requiring frequent cleaning.

New rules effecting lower **Columbia River** salmon fishermen start on August 1st, just as the Fall chinook fishery gets underway. Anglers from **Buoy 10 to Tongue Point** may keep two fish per day of which one may be a chinook. Wild coho must be released unharmed. Chinook must be at least 24 inches in length to retain, while hatchery coho have to be 16 inches or better to keep.

From **Tongue Pont to Bonneville**, the limit is six jacks over 12 inches and two adults with the same restrictions as above.

Another season which was recently been expanded is that for retaining sturgeon in the **Columbia estuary** where retention remains open seven days a week through August 15th for gators measuring 45 to 60 inches. While fishing has been spotty and bait-stealers numerous, the rewards of keeper-sized fish has been worth the trip.

The **Salmon, Tillamook, Trask, Wilson, Alsea, Yaquina Coos, Coquille, Rogue, and Umpqua Rivers** open for fin-clipped coho on August 1st. It is quite early for any numbers of fish here and forecasts aren't all that encouraging anyway.

Chinook fishing is fair out of **Depoe Bay** but the coho are not to be found. Bottom fishing remains great. All-depth halibut is open July 28th, 29th and 30th.

Steelheading is improving on the **Umpqua**. Fall chinook trollers on **Rogue Bay** saw some improvement this week.

The **Clackamas** and **Sandy Rivers** are low, warm and very slow. **North Santiam** steelheaders are finding great water levels, good numbers of fish but a tough bite in cold water.

Trout have been planted this week in the **Willamette Zone** at Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River Upper, Quartzville Creek and the North Fork Santiam River. In the **Deschutes** watershed, Badger Lake, Three Creeks Lake, Fall River, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek were stocked.

Washington Fishing Report

Pro guide Bob Barthlow (509-697-7125) reports the **Cowlitz** has been putting out excellent catches of summer steelhead. Small drifted baits are taking near limits for most boat guides. It's about time we got some good news from this river.

Jeff at JB's GUIDE SERVICE (509-547-7450) states the oversized sturgeon are still present although finding good bait for them below **McNary** has been challenging. The walleye action has been fair but there aren't many big fish present.

The return of sockeye salmon to **Lake Wenatchee** is not strong enough to allow a summer recreational fishery in the lake. But WDF&W throws its anglers a bone by opening up the ocean sportfishery in the **Cape Falcon** to Marine area 4 (Neah Bay) will open up 7 days/week for salmon fishing. Neah Bay has attained almost half of their Chinook quota.

Sportfishing in **Puget Sound** is fair in the north with about a Chinook every 10 boats. Further south, some of the best checks are coming from Olson's Resort where anglers are checking about a Chinook every 3 boats. The few anglers fishing out of Port Angeles tallied a Chinook/boat last weekend.

Tuna have been reported out of **Westport** but with cooler water temperatures, they are likely to head further out to sea.

Pat Long (509-751-0410) of **Snake River Guide Service** reports that the **Snake River** has warmed to about 72 deg. in the past week or so and with the warming the fishing is falling into the summer pattern-early and late are the prime times for all species. **Clearwater** steelhead fishing is so-so, the fish are stalling below the lower dams and not too many fresh fish are moving in on a daily basis.

Soapbox Update: Salmon and sport anglers **win** again!!!

Appeals court upholds Washington, Oregon dam spills

DAVID KRAVETS

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO - A federal appeals court on Tuesday (7/25) upheld a lower court order demanding that the government spill water through five Northwest hydroelectric dams to help young salmon migrating to the Pacific.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was forced to allow substantial flows to bypass energy generating turbines following a June 20 order by U.S. District Judge James Redden of Portland. Redden ruled that the salmon were imperiled when swimming through those dams' turbines as they headed to the sea hundreds of miles away.

The Bush administration called the order an "untested experiment," and "micromanaging the Columbia river" while urging the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse Redden's order.

A three-judge panel of the appeals court ruled unanimously that the judge "did not abuse" his discretion in ordering the increased water flows, which are to last through August.

The Bonneville Power Administration, which sells the electricity generated by the dams, estimated spilling the water rather than running it through turbines will cost \$67 million in lost revenue, which could be saddled on utility customers in Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington.

At the request of salmon advocates, fishermen and Indian tribes, Redden ruled that "As currently operated, I find that the dams strongly contributed to the endangerment of the listed species and irreparable injury will result if changes are not made."

Environmentalists, who brought the case, said the government hasn't been meeting its

obligations to protect the threatened salmon and eventually want to close four dams in southeastern Washington.

Redden's ruling targets Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor dams on the Snake River in southeastern Washington, and McNary Dam on the Columbia River straddling Oregon and Washington. While each dam only kills a small percentage of fish, more than half of the spring-summer chinook run from the Snake River end up being killed as they maneuver through all the dams' hydroelectric turbines.

The government argued that it has a salmon recovery plan in place that is jeopardized by Redden's ruling. For more than a decade, the government has been diverting fish captured in holding tanks at the dams, where they are then trucked or barged to the Columbia River in Oregon.

Since the water flows were increased, there have been 90 percent fewer fish transported down stream. Environmentalists argued that there was no evidence on whether the transported fish are able to migrate upstream, because they may not know the way.

Brian Gorman, a spokesman for the National Marine Fisheries Service, said the government was "obviously disappointed" with the decision. "We all have the same goal: to recover listed salmon stocks in the basin," he said.

Gorman said the agency would explore the court's recommendation that the government and the National Wildlife Federation, the case's lead plaintiff, hammer out an agreement that might alter "any problems with the district court's" decision.

Redden ordered that about two-thirds of the water that passes the dams to go through spillways instead of running through the dams' electricity generating turbines. That would drop gradually to about half as river levels lowered.

The Bonneville Power Administration estimated the extra spill will amount to an increase of 4 percent to 5 percent in the wholesale electricity rate of about \$32 per megawatt. That would typically amount to an increase of about 2 percent in the rates paid by residential customers, the BPA said.

Editors note: Can anyone answer me as to why the federal government is trying to shut down sportfishing on the Columbia River? Doesn't our vote count too? Not only is the attempt to curtail flow and spill not enough, the feds had to appeal Judge Redden's decision AND try and close down the Fish Passage Center where recovery is measured? When will it stop? Larry Craig of Idaho is doing all he can to halt our sportfishing and kill Snake River Salmon!

Columbia River Fishing Report – Recent reports indicate that the salmon fishing is improving near the CR Buoy out of Astoria. It has been a long wait but all that NW wind has finally paid off and the near shore temperatures have finally cooled off. Water temperatures have dropped to around 53 degrees and according to the Monday Morning report put out by ODF&W, over the past week and a half, the first significant upwelling event of the year occurred and pushed the warm water layer well offshore. Hopefully, this contributes to some serious plankton production as our baitfish and juvenile salmon and rockfish are in desperate need of a food supply! Large numbers of marine birds continue to wash up on North Coast beaches as their food supplies have disappeared. Oh yeah, we're talking about salmon. Some of the more recent checks have anglers tallying 1.4 salmon/rod out of the Astoria area. Anglers are releasing about as many fish as they are retaining. Another surge of NW winds are keeping many guides in port but weather reports for the weekend look encouraging. See The Guide's Forecast section for this information. One

recent piece of good news is the relaxation of ocean regulation in the North of Falcon to Leadbetter Point fishery. The fishery is now open 7 days/week and anglers are allowed to retain 2 salmon- either 2 fin-clipped coho or 2 Chinook or 1 of each! The change is the fact anglers can keep 2 Chinook instead of 1. This regulation lax happened last year as well and paid dividends for those willing to seek Chinook grounds and techniques. Chinook numbers are beginning to increase off the mouth of the Columbia so some staging may be taking place.

Sturgeon anglers in the estuary continue to experience sporadic action. Not much has changed since last week except the tides are not as extreme as they were earlier in the week. Deep water becomes a major strategy during these periods of small tidal exchanges. The water above Tongue Point continues to produce the best results for most sport anglers. There are a few guides and sport anglers that are taking fair numbers of keepers out of Hammond. This fishery however continues to be volatile and is a good option only if you find yourself turned back due to poor ocean conditions. Anchovies are the bait of choice- especially in the deep water fisheries but shrimp will produce good results in the shallower water. With the majority of the charter fleet in the ocean targeting salmon, tuna and bottomfish, the sturgeon quota will likely remain viable for river anglers until the August 15th closure. It will be a great option until the salmon show in the river- which I don't predict happening until at least mid-month.

Gorge anglers are realizing the same results as last week. Oversized fishing remains stable if you can find fresh floater shad for bait. The sanctuary opens up for anglers on August 1st and oversize action should be great up there. The majority of the broodstock have spawned by now but anglers need to still exercise care during the fight and release of these fish. The warmer water temperatures can have adverse effects on these fish but if handled properly, the oversize fish will fare well. Concurrently, the catch and keep fishing will close on August 1st but technically, on July 31st since this fishery is only open Thursdays thru Saturdays. The last stint of catch and keep fishing will be fair at best. Anglers will likely see the best results coming from soaked smelt or floater shad strips.

Anglers targeting steelhead this last week fared well throughout the lower river. The minus tide series is always a good thing for bank anglers working the lower river. The best action came from the estuary boat anglers where over a hatchery fish/boat was checked. Many of these boats anchor in strategic locations with spin-n-glos or small Kwikfish, waiting for migrating fish. The stronger the flow, the closer to the bank these fish will travel. Some boats motor to the islands around Wauna and plunk spin-n-glos from the bank. Hot colors always out-produce others in this fishery. Steelheaders in the gorge did well over the weekend as well. To get that fish/boat average for gorge anglers however, you'll have to count the wild fish released along with hatchery fish kept. Small spinners (gold preferably) take these fish in a little deeper water than downriver. Location is key for gorge anglers as the serious ones are in their spots before the sun rises (remember those "younger" days.....?) Gorge bank anglers took about a fish every other rod (also counting wild ones released).

Crabbing and bottomfishing remain poor out of Astoria.

The Guide's Forecast – The big news for the week will be the traditional opener of the Buoy 10 fishery. The bigger news for the week is that the fishing won't be very good for the opener. But, none-the-less, people will feel obligated to get down there and get after all of those river fish. I think enough people have history with this fishery to know this will not be the year to get after them early. With coho numbers down and salmon just now beginning to show a few miles offshore, the chance for a river fish this early in the season will not be high. The only thing giving an angler any hope of success is the fact that the tides will be with you. With low slack (and a good one at that), anglers may actually stand a chance at an early Chinook by starting off at the Buoy 10 line on the very last part of the outgoing tide. During peak season, this is a sure place to

intercept a "tide-exchange" Chinook. As the tide progresses in, nearby coho may wash in for anglers holding at the line. Some anglers may want to explore the tide-riding Chinook on either the Washington or Oregon sides of the river. About 1 hour after low slack, if the action slows at the line (and it always does), if you are looking for Chinook, pick up your gear and run upstream at least a mile and begin trolling upstream until you get in front of Hammond or at the bridge. Then turn into the tide and hold on the incoming tide varying your depth to intercept migrating Chinook. You may just want to bypass the upstream troll and just go hold in one of these locations. This will become a common theme I will write about in the coming weeks and it is one that has worked for me over the last several years. In the warmer water temperatures, hardware will again work well this year (spinners and wobblers) as well as herring. You'll just have to be mindful of how deep to fish at what time of the tide.

If the Buoy 10 fishing doesn't pan out, the ocean is finally forecasted to lay down to make morning fishing tolerable. The weekend forecast is calling for swells to subside to 3 feet and wind waves to 2 foot. The NW wind is still slated to blow but only to 15 knots and that will most likely take place in the afternoon. Minus tides will begin on Monday and by mid-week, may cause some issues with bar crossings. Until then, this weekend may be one of the best opportunities for ocean salmon out of Astoria all season! Hit the CR Buoy and south but start your fishing at Buoy 2 in case there are any fish in close. The colder water temperatures should create dramatic increases in success rates. Early risers should target salmon closer to the surface. As the sun rises, drop your baits down as deep as 25 strips if you are targeting coho and 60 strips if you are looking for Chinook.

Order anchovies for bait as the larger ones will work well as trolled bait for ocean salmon. Smaller anchovies will work well behind flashers and hoochies. Any leftover baits will work well for motivated anglers wanting to get in a grand slam for sturgeon as well. It will be harder to find willing sturgeon below the bridge (crabs being a major factor behind poor success) but they are present there. The more durable herring will hold up a little longer in the trash fish infested waters. If you wish to take your sturgeon fishing a little more seriously, take your boat out and re-launch out of the East End Basin or John Day Ramps.

If you are going to crab, put your pots in the ocean. The most popular place is south of the south jetty in 30 to 40 feet of water. Fresh bait will nab you about 2 keeper males/pot.

Upriver, sturgeon anglers only have a few days left to harvest a keeper from the gorge. Smelt or floater shad strips will work best and water from Skamania Flats to Beacon Rock will be your best bet. Don't expect great results however but shaker action should be enough to keep your focus. Oversize sturgeon will also keep you focused but you will have to work harder for those fish. Floater shad is key to your success and you may have a hard time finding what you need for a day's adventure.

Steelheaders in the area are beginning to revel in higher steelhead counts at Bonneville Dam. Steady counts between 4,000 and 5,000 fish are being tallied daily. Hatchery fish outnumber wild fish 3 to 1 on most days but with wild fish being more aggressive, the catch is nearly 50/50. With the bright mornings, small, metallic spinners in gold or nickel will continue to take fish but the most successful anglers know what "lanes" to fish and have to get up early to ensure their positions. Be prepared for a learning curve. Salmon are still present but only a rare one is caught.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Fish counts at Willamette Falls reflect the Dog Days of summer with seven chinook and 16 summer steelhead counted on Sunday, July 24th, the latest data available.

Forget the shad - those who didn't make it to Oregon City have officially missed the run this year.

It's over.

Local guide Bill Sanderson, Oregon's foremost expert on the North Santiam, estimates there are 150 salmon and steelhead per river mile currently. While that's quite a few fish and pretty fair odds, Sanderson says that this number is below average for the river at this time of year. The water is unseasonably cool on the North Santiam with temperatures in the upper 40s at Packsaddle and 50 degrees at Mehema.

The Guide's Forecast – Water temperature at the Falls is currently 75 degrees. That'd be bathwater ... or bass water. Anglers so inclined will find willing smallmouth on rocky cover but head elsewhere for the salmonids. A few sturgeon have been taken below the mouth of the Willamette but the Columbia estuary will give anglers targeting this specie a better shot at a keeper.

Experienced steelheaders on the North Santiam will find a deliberate presentation and naturally-drifted baits of a bit larger size effective in the summer-level water. Scent will boost the odds in cold water.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Steelheaders on the Sandy report spotting plenty of fish in the low water, but catching them is next to impossible. It's a long shot at best but the magic pre-dawn hour may yield a fish.

A similar story is being told by anglers who have tried the Clackamas. There are good numbers of fish in the water but they're not hitting anything. Low water levels and high water temperatures don't make for a successful fishing trip.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Most of the focus this time of year goes to the Nehalem River. Sporadic reports continue to come from the Nehalem with most recent reports indicating the fishing is poor. NSIA and NW Steelheader lobbyist Phil Donovan fished the mouth over the weekend and reported poor results. Phil states, "Expectations were high for some good fishing at the mouth of the Nehalem with the big tides last weekend. But alas, the fickle fishing gods left our trolled whole herring and cut plug herrings untouched. On Saturday, three salmon were reportedly caught in front of Wheeler and another at the mouth (nothing in front of Nehalem). On Sunday, saw one salmon caught at the mouth... didn't stick around long enough to hear if more were caught in Wheeler or Nehalem on Sunday." Now, if Phil was a TGF subscriber, he would know that those strong tides mean he should have been focusing his efforts higher in the bay with spinners or bait. The weaker tides seem to be more productive for lower bay fishing. Let's get you signed up, Phil....

As if I knew better.....avid angler and Rockaway superstar **Rich Riley** gave up his stats and gave this fishing guide a reality check when he submitted this report. Rich writes, "I have been shut-out at wheeler (Wheeler to Paradise Cove park)... I have gone almost every morning and I only see 1 or 2 fish caught each a.m. (15-20 boats) I did hear that they got 9 on Tuesday (26th) but I was not there. Saw one this a.m. and was told of another 2. That's such a small area that I think I would see it if fish were caught... I have noted the following on my records that I keep: July 18th - no fish. 19th 7 fish @ high tide, 20th 2 fish, 21st no fish, 24th 2 fish, 25th 1 fish (1 fish lost) 26th 9 fish, 27th 3 fish, 28th- 2 fish, ... I am following your instructions to the "T"... perhaps we can enroll the salmon in your seminar next year !" Thanks for the detail Rich. I'll check these fish's schedule before I conduct next years seminar!

Ocean fishing out of Garibaldi has remained poor with the warm ocean and closes on July 31st regardless of the quota. I don't know for sure but I believe it closes this early despite not meeting the quota because most of the fish harvested in this fishery are Columbia River bound

and have passed through this area by now. Therefore, most of the fish that would be caught here are either wild or of sensitive status and shouldn't be subject to stress. What a disappointment this ocean fishery has been! Bottomfishing remains a highlight but some fear a change in water temperatures may effect the bottomfish bite. Crabbing has improved in the ocean out of Garibaldi. It remains fair and over-crabbed in Tillamook and Nehalem Bays.

Coastal rivers remain low and clear for summer steelheaders. Metro traffic has increased making swimming much more popular than fishing on the Wilson. The fish are down but over 100 bright spring Chinook have been recycled downstream to the 5th street ramp on the Trask River. Even more steelhead than that have been recycled on the Nestucca system to fish are still present to catch. Transport and water temperatures will keep success rates low however.

Anglers fishing the deeper slots on the Wilson are managing the occasional steelhead. A few have fallen to lures but deep-drifting baits will often tempt spooky metalheads. Perch fishing has been very good on North coast in the surf on beaches and jetties.

The Salmon, Tillamook, Trask and Wilson rivers open for fin-clipped coho on August 1st

Central & South Coast Reports – The coho remain nearly a no-show which has recreational and charter fishermen alike shaking their heads, wondering whether or not they'll show this year. The fishery from Cape Falcon to the California border closes to all coho on July 31st.

Tillamook Bay has been reliable for hard-shelled crabs although limits are hard to come by. Crabbing has been good in the ocean although pots will yield a mix of soft, hard and "hard enough" amongst prolific catches of Dungeness. Crabbing has been best in Yaquina Bay where numbers are good and most are hard.

Offshore bottom fishing continues to produce good catches, but this has resulted in a reduced limit; it's five instead of eight rockfish per angler but two ling cod over 24 inches may still be kept. The demand on this resource was just too great, resulting in this bag reduction. Hey, at least it's still open.

Pro Guide Bill Kremers (541 754-641) fished out of Newport and wrote to TGF: " ... not much to report this week as a rough ocean has keep me off the coast. The good news is that they are calling for calming ocean this weekend. This might be our last chance to go out for coho, as the season is suppose to close at the end of the month. Last time I checked only about 9% of the quota has been caught. This is also a halibut weekend."

"Halibut weekend" refers to the all-depth fishery which is open July 28th, 29th and 30th.

Ocean chinook fishing continues on the central and Southern Oregon coast with fair to good catches reports and some boats taking limits.

Sturgeon fishing on the lower Umpqua has dropped off, but there may be hope with the next decent tidal series starting the first week in August. Summer steelhead fishing is improving on the North Umpqua. The South continues to provide some of the best smallmouth bass fishing in Oregon for sheer numbers of fish.

Coho fishing opens on the Alsea, Yaquina Coos, Coquille, Rogue, and Umpqua Rivers on the first of August where hatchery fish may be kept.

The pressure is on at Rogue Bay for those early Fall chinook with many times more boats than fish. A couple-dozen a day would be considered stellar at this time of year. Weeds have been

challenging trollers lately. First light has been most productive with the traditional Rogue River spinner rig and anchovy. This week showed promise but it'll be a couple of weeks 'til the fish arrive en masse.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Long-time subscriber and contributor 'Dobe' writes this week, "On Tuesday, the 26th, I loaded up my two inflatable 8 ft pontoon boats and swung thru Sisters to pick up a fishing buddy on the way up to Three Creeks Lake, about 13 miles South of Sisters. Got out on the water about 11 am. I fished lures and bait and Les did the fly fishing thing. The afternoon fished tough with Les only getting a few rises and after I resorted to nightcrawlers, I only had two 12 inch rainbows. About 6:30 things started picking up. Les hooked and released 10 nice rainbows and I had limited out on rainbows using a small Colorado spinner before dark. We had decided that we would keep any fish I caught for a dinner meal and he would release all his since he was using barbless hooks. My biggest was 15 inches and on my 5 ft Fenwick willow action rod he gave me quite a fight, soaking me and my little boat in the process. The last 2 miles into Three Creeks Lake is a real nasty road. Passenger cars were making it ok, but the wrong choice thru the rocks could result in a holed oil pan. I have fished the lake twice this year and always done good. It is a neat place to take a float tube. No motors allowed."

Northwest Trout – On the landlocked salmon scene, Green Peter has a fair bite on jigs for kokanee a foot long or better while Paulina and Lake Billy Chinook are fair to good for kokes. While the sockeye are MIA at Simtustus, the trout fishing is holding up well. Wickiup kokanee fishing is slow. The algae bloom at Odell has put the skids to kokanee fishing there. Trout have been planted this week in the Willamette Zone at Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River Upper, Quartzville Creek and the North Fork Santiam River. In the Deschutes watershed, Badger Lake, Three Creeks Lake, Fall River, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek were stocked.

Washington Fishing Report

Pro guide Bob Barthlow (509-697-7125) reports, "We're still fishing Summer Steelhead on the Cowlitz, one more week to go, then we start the CR gorge. Fished the Cowlitz ten of the last 14 days and are getting lot's of limits. We're getting summer steelhead both side drifting corkies and yarn and backtrolling plugs and bait divers, between Blue Creek and Toledo. Tacoma City Light brought the river flow up from 2550 cfs to 4700 cfs last Tuesday and that was a tough day to fish, we went 2-2 all day. Fishing picked up for us Wednesday thru Friday and limits and nears limits those days. Our catch has been both 2 salt and 3 salt Summer runs, with 3 salts going 15#-18# daily.

Forecast is for fair to good fishing the next couple weeks on the Cowlitz River, as long as flows remain steady.



Wyatt Spithaler age 9, from Bonnie Lake Wa. with a 18# Cowlitz summer run



Zach Johnson age 8 from Conway Wa. with a 17# Cowlitz summersteelhead.

Jeff at JB's GUIDE SERVICE (509-547-7450) reports, Sturgeon fishing below McNary just seems to be holding on as long as they continue to spill. I am hooking 2-5 oversized fish per day. Shad can still be caught but you have to work for them. Although I haven't been fishing Boardman for walleye I have some friends who have been catching some bigger fish there. I have been catching walleye closer to the dam but a 30 inch fish is a whopper right now as most fish seem to be in 17-25 inch range. My son fished the Big White riffle with eggs and landed a

nice 13 pound native steelhead on Monday and reports no other fish seen taken.

Pat Long (509-751-0410) of Snake River Guide Service reports that the Snake River has warmed to about 72 deg. in the past week or so and with the warming the fishing is falling into the summer pattern-early and late are the prime times for all species. Look for some nice smallmouth up shallow and hitting top water presentations for the first hour or so in the AM and again at dusk, work deep cranks and plastics the rest of the day, most mid-day fish will be smaller but numbers are good. Sturgeon fishing is still excellent in the C&R section of the river, the big gals are starting to lay up in the deeper holes with the best aeration and will pretty much stay in the areas until the water starts cooling down.

Clearwater steelhead fishing is so-so, the fish are stalling below the lower dams and not too many fresh fish are moving in on a daily basis. Best success to date has been backtrolling plugs, other methods (sidedrifting, spinners, flyfishing etc.) are producing some fish but the pluggers seem to be having the best success to date. Water temps on the Clearwater are ideal (low 50s) and when these fish start moving we'll see some good action on the lower section of the river.

Press releases from WDF&W:

July 26, 2005

Lake Wenatchee sockeye return means no sport fishery this year

OLYMPIA - The return of sockeye salmon to Lake Wenatchee is not strong enough to allow a summer recreational fishery in the lake, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) announced today.

Through July 24, approximately 11,000 Lake Wenatchee-bound sockeye were counted at Tumwater Dam on the Wenatchee River, well short of the number of fish needed for spawning escapement and a strong indication that the total run is too weak to open fishing.

"We are disappointed that this popular sport fishery will not be open this year, as it was in 2004," said Tim Flint, WDFW statewide salmon manager. Last year, an estimated 4,748 anglers caught approximately 5,400 sockeye during a sport season that ran from July 24 through the end of August. Recreational fisheries also occurred on Lake Wenatchee in 2001 and 1993.

"With continued good spawning numbers, downstream passage conditions and marine survival we hope that returns in the future will allow a sport fishery on a more consistent basis," Flint said.

OLYMPIA - Salmon anglers along most of the Washington coast will be able to fish seven days a week and keep up to two chinook per day beginning Friday, July 29, under a rule change approved today by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Only Neah Bay (Marine Area 4), where anglers have already caught nearly half of their chinook quota, will stay on a five-day schedule, with a maximum of one chinook as part of the two-salmon daily limit.

Fishing had been confined at Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) and Westport (Marine Area 2) to Sundays through Thursdays since the season opened a month ago and at LaPush from Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Slow starts in those areas are allowing officials to offer more fishing without risking an early

closure, said Tim Flint, WDFW's salmon resource manager. The department made a similar change last summer.

Fishing is scheduled to continue until Sept. 30 at Ilwaco and Sept. 18 at Westport and LaPush.

Through July 24, anglers fishing out of Ilwaco had caught just 10 percent of their guideline of 8,200 chinook and 9 percent of their 60,900 coho quota, Flint said. At Westport, they had landed 15 percent of the 28,750 chinook guideline and 6 percent of the 45,066 coho target. In LaPush, they had taken 23 percent of the 1,900 chinook total and 6 percent of the 3,067 coho quota.

At Neah Bay, by comparison, fishers have already caught 44 percent of their 4,300 chinook guideline and 47 percent of the 12,667 coho, Flint said.

The catch rate in Ilwaco has been about 1.2 salmon per angler, but only about half as many people have fished than during the past three years, Flint said. At Westport, where the catch rate is two-thirds of a fish per person, participation is down by about a third. It has dropped by 18 percent at LaPush, where just under half the anglers have caught a fish. Neah Bay has seen a 10 percent spike in anglers, who have averaged 1.1 salmon.

"Ocean salmon fishing has generally been good, and catch rates should continue to improve as the season progresses," Flint said.

All other fishing rules remain in place. Chinook must be at least 24 inches to retain and hatchery coho must be at least 16 inches. Wild coho must be released unharmed.

Sportfishing in the northern Puget Sound is producing about a Chinook for every 10 boats. A mixed bag of bottom fish and a few coho are in the catch. The Gig harbor check recently was 9 boats with 2 Chinook and 1 pink salmon. Hood Canal is also producing about the same results with a few more pinks in the catches.

The Point Defiance check counted 33 boats with 66 anglers retaining 4 Chinook, 5 coho and one pink.

Some of the best checks are coming from Olson's Resort where anglers are checking about a Chinook every 3 boats. Coho numbers reflect about 1 every 2 boats and every boat is averaging a pink salmon too. One of the better checks was on Saturday with 109 boats with 274 anglers showing 32 chinook, 38 coho, 97 pink, 27 rockfish, two halibut, and seven greenling.

Port Angeles anglers are averaging a Chinook per boat.

Tuna have been reported out of Westport but with the recent cooling of the water, that is likely a thing of the past. Coho catches should improve and Columbia River bound Chinook should start to migrate through in higher numbers.

Write to the TGF staff:

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Random Links

Current ocean salmon catch rates:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/catchindex.html>

History of catches and notes on the Oregon kokanee fishery:

<http://www.coastangler.com/kokane/Past.html>

"Jaws" has nothin' on this brute:

<http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/4746503/detail.html>



Weekly Quote – "You are standing, rod in hand, at the head of the Cairn's Pool on the Route 17 side, when simultaneously (A) a case of bonded bourbon whiskey bounces off a passing truck and lands undamaged in the middle of the highway, where the next passing motorist is sure to see it and pick it up, (B) at the lower end of the pool a beautiful and shapely blonde who has been swimming starts shrieking that she has lost her bathing suite and urges you to hurry down and restore her circulation by any means you choose, as she is getting chilly, (C) across the river a barefoot boy gets his foot caught in a switch of the Delaware, New York and Ontario Western tracks and hollers for you to cross over and pry him loose before the Binghamton Express, which is due in three minutes, comes around the bend, and (D) a brown trout of at least four pounds begins to feed greedily on large mayflies within easy casting distance, and is obviously a cinch for a #10 Light Cahill. In one sentence, state what you would do.

"I don't intend to tip our mitt on this because we might want to use it in another examination. But it might help to bear in mind that four-pound trout in the Beaverkill are a lot harder to come by than bourbon, blondes or barefoot boys." - Ed Zern

GOOD LUCK!