

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **January 6<sup>th</sup>, – January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Willamette Falls was more like a short drop than a waterfall upon observation on Monday, January 2nd. Logs and debris in the water at that time made for extremely hazardous boating. Fishing was not an option as of the following morning, either, but action will improve with moderating weather. Although opportunity may still be a week away, steelhead should begin to show in fair numbers when turbid waters begin to clear.

As of January 1st, the Willamette River was one degree warmer than the Columbia. When the waters recede a bit and logs have washed downstream, sturgeon fishing on the lower Willamette should be worthwhile. Debris is not as much of a problem downstream of the St. Johns Bridge and a few keepers are beginning to fall to smelt.

Columbia River sturgeon anglers continue to be greeted with cold east winds. Although this mostly effects gorge anglers, the east wind is keeping keepers from biting in the mainstem. Shakers were the rule in last weeks creel checks with the best action reported from Troutdale area boats. The river around the mouth of the Willamette will provide the best opportunity for keeper sturgeon.

Gillnetters took several hundred pounds of smelt last week in the lower Columbia. Fresh smelt will be very hard to find but for the few anglers that have it, results should be good. Smelt are frequently caught this early in the season but often times, it is just a pilot run. The smelt outlook is not optimistic but this species can certainly be a wildcard to predict. Starting Jan. 7, the popular fishery on the Cowlitz is scheduled to run from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. each Saturday through March 31, with a daily catch limit of 10 pounds per person.

Visibility on the Sandy River was passable on Monday, January 2nd and the level was dropping. The best odds for steelhead will be to start high on the system. Bait or scented lures are most effective in turbid water.

Clackamas steelheaders have reported high, dirty water here. Eagle Creek has fallen into shape and produced a few winter fish earlier this week.

If the rivers remain un-fishable for the weekend, try the Portland Boat Show at the Expo Center. It runs from Saturday, January 7th through Sunday, January 15th.

The 2006 rounds of trout stocking start on Monday, January 9th. These plants include "catchable-sized" trout of eight to ten inches plus some foot-long at many valley locations. Look for a fresh fish infusion of State-raised rainbows at Junction City Pond, Walling Pond, Walter Wirth Lake and Huddleston Pond in the Willamette Zone. Cleawox Lake, Dune Lake and Munsel Lake will be stocked in the Northwest Zone.

**Mid Columbia -** Although sturgeon fishing is open from the Bonneville Pool upstream to McNary Dam, east winds kept many anglers tied up since the opener. The weather is forecasted to moderate which may give anglers the best opportunity in months to pursue keepers in these pools.

Heavy rain put the John Day River out of shape chasing most steelheaders into the mainstem.

Trollers averaged about a steelhead for every 2 boats in the Columbia while bank anglers landed 3 hatchery fish for 17 rods over the weekend.

**Northwest -** Smaller streams like the Kilchis, Necanicum and North Fork Nehalem fished well on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> and river levels are expected to maintain themselves to where steelheaders should have good opportunity into the weekend. As river levels drop, plugs will become more effective.

Larger river systems like the Wilson and Trask will also fall into shape by the weekend giving anglers the best opportunity in weeks for coastal chrome. Some fresh Chinook may be in the catch but anglers need to remember that the Chinook season closed on the last day of December. With flows still high, fish will be on the move so higher stretches of the coastal drainages will fish better. Bank anglers also have access to hatchery fish along Highway 6 as steelhead have already been recycled from the South Fork of the Wilson- high in the watershed.

**Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports, "The Nestucca has fallen victim to a few mudslides and therefore may take longer than other North Coast rivers to clear. When it does, fishing will be viable throughout the system but hatchery fish will be most available from Three Rivers downstream. Three Rivers itself is kicking into action with most fish being taken at the deadline."

Poor weather conditions kept most people off the bay this week. Tides were right for sturgeon fishing at mid-week although not many took advantage of them. Crabbers wishing to take advantage of weekend afternoon tides may find some reward on Tillamook and Netarts Bays. Safety is emphasized as Tillamook Bay claimed the lives of 2 people in 3 days just before New Years day.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411):** Debris and logs were reported earlier this week at the Alsea River. A couple of boathouses were seen drifting downstream as well. With decreasing precipitation, the Alsea should fish this weekend if slides upstream don't cause muddy water.

Huge seas should keep anxious bottomfishers in the harbor. New bag limits apply for bottomfish so be sure to check the regulations before you depart. Bottomfishing and ocean crabbing should be good when seas subside.

Clammers fared poorly on the last tide- likely due to heavy surf that often keeps razors from feeding near the surface. The next minus tide series is the middle of next week but high surf is predicted to continue.

**Southwest -** The lower Umpqua was still running high and brown. With a moderation in the weather, sturgeon fishing should turn on here.

Like most South coast streams, the Coos and Coquille rivers are high and off-color. Following this flushing, winter steelhead fishing is expected to be good.

The Rogue River crested at just over flood stage on New Years Eve but has been dropping steadily since.

**Southwest Washington-** Fair numbers of hatchery steelhead are being recycled on the Kalama River. Overall, steelhead numbers look to be close to half of last years returns.

The Cowlitz River remains high and colored but should drop back into fishable status by early next week. Numbers of steelhead on this system indicate a smaller return than recent run

history.

**Eastern - Pro guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688)** reports, "weather conditions are turning back to normal for steelheaders eager to fish the Grande Ronde River. Heavy rains have turned back to snow in the higher elevations and the area rivers could fish again by the weekend."

**Soap Box Update -** Here' your chance to be heard as the Powers The Be decide **Spring Chinook Allocations:**

To: Sport Anglers and Sportfishing Business

From: Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association

Subj: Columbia River Spring Chinook Allocation between sport and gillnet fisheries

Proposed increase in steelhead by-catch by gillnet fisheries

The Oregon and Washington Fish & Wildlife Commissions will be considering a multiple year allocation agreement between sport fishing and commercial gillnetting for Columbia River Spring Chinook. The Commissions will also reconsider an increase in the number of steelhead by-catch allowed in the gillnet fishery. You need to weigh in! The Commissions will make their decisions right in front of you. It really matters that you show up.

The Oregon Commission will meet on Friday, January 6, 2006 at the Salem ODFW headquarters beginning at 8:00 a.m.

More info: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/>

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – The big news on the Columbia is the showing of a pilot run of smelt in the lower river. Gillnets working the tides found about 500 pounds of smelt last week. This is not an unusual occurrence but this years run is not forecasted to be anything special. Biologists look at several different factors when predicting returning smelt. Commercial bycatch of smelt in the British Columbia pink shrimp fishery is often an indicator of the following years return. Also, recruitment of previous age classes of returning spawners can indicate how large the new years run will be. None of the factors points to a good run of fish- but hey, these are fish and we all know the recent history of mis-predictions by agency biologists. None-the-less, agency personnel are taking the most conservative approach allowing a one day/week fishery for sport smelt dippers on the Cowlitz. The limit is 10 pounds per dipper. Recreational smelt dipping can take place 7 days/week on the mainstem Columbia- the fact is, dipping is very challenging here and so is bank access. On the mainstem Columbia, the limit is 25 pounds/dipper.

For anglers looking to buy smelt for premium sturgeon bait, the price is steep. It is currently going for \$5/pound but the challenging part is actually finding some for sale. Sorry we can't help you here.

Now before you get all excited about Columbia River sturgeon fishing, there is something you should know. It sucks..... Creel checks remain consistent in the fact that very few keepers are being taken in the Columbia River. Weekend checks indicate that the best fishing is taking place in the Troutdale area where only shakers were recorded. East winds hampered effort in the gorge again last week. Winds are forecasted to moderate so conditions should improve.

Upriver, no reports are coming in from pools upstream of Bonneville as poor weather conditions hampered angler effort in these reaches too. Not even the lure of fresh quotas inspired anglers to

the river last week. The Columbia River is now open 7 days/week from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam. Size restrictions vary by pool so be sure to check regulations. Historically, the Bonneville Pool can be a great place to fish this time of year.

Steelheaders in the middle reach of the lower Columbia are still pursuing summer run steelhead. Although the John Day River is typically the river of focus this time of year, last weeks high water drove most anglers into the Columbia to find satisfactory water conditions. Effort was still light but catch has dropped off from previous weeks. None-the-less, trollers tallied a fish for every other boat while bank anglers landed a keeper for every fifth rod. Catches should continue to drop off but the John Day River may get good again when it begins to clear.

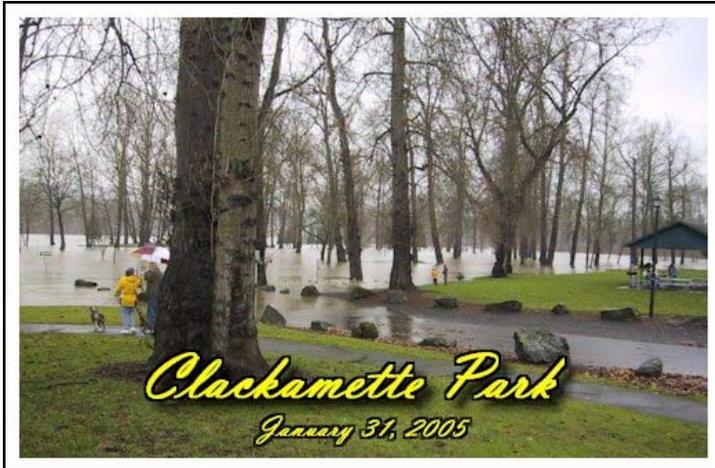
**The Guide's Forecast** – Even though smelt made top headlines this week, it really is a non-factor for angler interest. There is no sign of Cowlitz smelt and the mainstem Columbia may be too loaded up with debris for additional commercial harvest. Frequently, small, pilot schools of smelt show up this time of year and then disappear for several more weeks. The good news is, this seasons landings are already 5 times greater than last years ENTIRE catch! (100 pounds in 2005, 485 pounds so far this year). We'll let you know when the smelt hit the Cowlitz!

Sturgeon anglers will have another tough week of keeper fishing. Even if anglers have some of the fresh smelt that were taken in last week's commercial fishery, keepers seem to be a scarcity on the mainstem. As mentioned in previous week's editions, sturgeon seem to migrate out to other estuaries this time of year in pursuit of other food sources.

Desperate anglers should seek keepers in the Bonneville Pool using as fresh a smelt as one can get. Hopefully, weather will begin to cooperate with anglers through the Columbia River Gorge as fresh quotas have anglers anxious.

Steelheaders still wishing to work the John Day Pool will have another few weeks of opportunity. Success will likely continue to drop off in upcoming weeks. Effort will also likely switch back to the John Day Arm itself as it is much easier to target steelhead in the more readable water of the John Day.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Willamette Falls was more like a short drop than a waterfall upon observation on Monday, January 2nd. Logs and debris in the water at that time made for extremely hazardous boating. Fishing was not an option as of Tuesday morning, either, but action will improve with moderating weather. Although opportunity may still be a week away, steelhead should begin to show in fair numbers when turbid waters begin to clear.



(Photo by Kap'n Ken Johnson)

**The Guide's Forecast** – Water temps in the lower Willamette were a promising 46 degrees mid-week. As mentioned previously, sturgeon like high, muddy water, but it takes a water temp higher than that of the Columbia to entice these fish into the Willamette from the Big River in winter time. If the debris on the lower Willamette flushes out, sturgeon fishing is a weekend option. The Willamette River and Multnomah Channel is open too retention of sturgeon on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through July.

Plunkers continued to try their luck on the banks of the Willamette below the Clackamas through most of the high water, when, that is, there were any banks from which to fish. These few persistent bank devotees have been catching fish, too, though only a couple. This will change in the coming week as bank fishers start to line up en masse on Meldrum Bar.

Come February, the North Santiam will start to reward as numbers of wild steelhead build to catchable levels to create a worthwhile catch-and-release fishery. With the shift to fin-clipped broodstock steelies which run concurrently with those of natural origin in the Clack and more notably the Sandy River, the latter fisheries are likely to have greater appeal.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – The Clackamas River level peaked at 32.6 feet at Oregon City the evening of January 2nd. As of early Wednesday this week it had dropped to 28.7. That's still high and flows are swift but the water color is improving.

Sandy River steelheaders found passable conditions earlier this week. The snow level often effects this Columbia tributary to a greater degree than persistence precipitation. It remains to be seen of the rain expected in the next few days has a detrimental effect on visibility here.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Finally. There's hope for winter steelhead in the rivers as we get a break from torrential rains. Many rivers still suffer the effects from recent storms and rain in the next few days may cause setbacks, but the calendar and conditions are coinciding - The time is now.

We know when, but what about where and how? Let's examine what the TGF pro guides have suggested over the years.

As always, smaller tributaries will fish first. Eagle Creek, for instance, dropped and cleared earlier

this week. Most rivers now have winter steelhead present.

Larger rivers are likely to be high this weekend with plenty of fast water. Many will still be a little off-color, but steelhead can be caught under these conditions. A freshet the likes of the one recently will encourage steelhead to high-tail upstream. Start high on the systems. Use bait scented with fish-attracting oils in low-visibility conditions. As the water clears, drifting corky with a wisp of yarn will be effective, but keep the yarn scented. Bobber and jig will be attractive to fish as visibility improves. When the water is fairly clear, spinners come into play.

For boat anglers, plugs will draw strikes under different water conditions as these can be backed downstream right into the steelhead's maw. Vary colors according to water clarity.

Anglers will find fish close to the bank when waters are roiled and flowing swiftly. Steelhead will take the path of least resistance which is invariably near shore; often only a little further than the end of the rod tip for bank anglers. Over-casting is common in these conditions as those unfamiliar with steelhead habits are incredulous that fish can be hooked just a few feet from where they're standing.

A handful of winter steelhead have been seen at the hatchery on Eagle Creek, so the Clack shows a glimmer of hope for the weekend. Expect to find plenty of water, though, and it'll be moving fast.

Long about mid-January and continuing into February anglers can expect to see steelhead to showing in significant numbers on the Sandy River. The planting of hatchery fish has shifted to broodstock here, which run timing naturally coincides with that of their wild parentage. Fish have been caught this week and barring a deluge, this is a best bet in the metro area for a winter steelhead encounter this weekend.

If you haven't caught the Jack and Brandon Glass' free steelhead seminars in area sporting goods stores on Thursdays each week, you've got a couple more chances. They'll be appearing from 6:30 PM 'til 8 PM on January 12th at G.I. Joes on Cedar Hills Boulevard in Beaverton and again on the 19th at Joes on Lancaster in Salem. These guys know the Sandy and the techniques they freely share will work anywhere.

**North Coast District Fishing Report** – Anglers finally got what they wanted when area rivers began to fish again on January 4<sup>th</sup>. Although smaller streams began to fish on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, larger systems like the Wilson posted results the very next day. Results did vary however and the cumulative results indicate we are not in for a banner year of hatchery steelheading on the Northern Oregon Coast.

I started my New Year with a trip to the Necanicum River on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Avid angler John Weed fished with me and vacuumed that river like very few customers can. He came up with 1 wild fish just about a mile below the Sitka Spruce put-in and another spent hatchery fish that we released on a metallic pink Tadpolly. John had a few other bites but they did not materialize into fish.

Talking with another guide (the only other boat we saw on the river), he took 2 fresh hatchery fish and released one spent hatchery fish to boot. We saw him take the 2 hatchery fish (a double) just below the put-in on bobbers and jigs.

Anglers that fished the lower Wilson River on the 4<sup>th</sup> did not fare all that well. Talking to several guides that were working the water below Mill Bridge, several skunks were doled out and I even heard of a fresh Chinook that had to be released. Pure Fishing's Conservation Director **Jim**

**Martin** took out 2 colleagues of his, fishing the Vanderzanden to Donaldson's drift, hooking 6 steelhead and landing 1. Jim stated they were hitting fish on bobber and jigs and drifting bait.

The water in the upper Wilson drifts was fishing great! Around 100 hatchery steelhead were recently recycled back into the lower river from the South Fork Camp high in the Wilson River watershed.

Down south, **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports, "The Nestucca is still too high and very dirty. There have been a bunch of slides on both the main river and on Three Rivers. So, it will take a couple of extra dry days to get things to clear. There have been fish caught in Three Rivers over the last couple of days, and the conditions should improve over the next couple of dry days. We also, do not know where the fish are in the river, but we will find them.

The main river might fish late in the week-end. Might!!! I hear we can go fish some of the road areas near Dallas. I'm sure there is a little green fish that has found it's way out of the Willamette, and is cruising a farmers field some place." Jesse continues, "We have just had a bunch of rain, and it will take a few extra days from the normal trends, to get things back into shape. I still have water coming out of my back yard, so we are totally full on the table. I would expect to see fish caught through the entire river once we get into shape. We will just have to see how it goes. When something Earth Shattering happens, I'll let you know, other than the sky falling..."

Trask River anglers are finding some success on wild steelhead. When the flows are higher, the Dam Hole on the Trask fished quite well. Heavy leads and big baits pay dividends to those that ply these waters. It looks like the Dam Hole may be another good option as precipitation is forecasted to return.

The Kilchis was also in great shape on the 4<sup>th</sup> but there were no glowing reports of great fishing under these ideal conditions.

Also worth mentioning are Gnat and Big Creek. Earlier in the week, Gnat Creek was putting out some decent numbers of fish. It is one of the best options when many Clatsop County rivers are too high for good results. Big Creek is also a good option but so far, Gnat Creek seems to be producing better results.

**The Guide's Forecast** – As is often the case this time of year, precipitation will dictate the fishing forecast this week. Small stream anglers may have an advantage as rivers are one again forecast to rise. Rain is supposed to start in again as early as Thursday eve putting weekend steelheaders on hold. If North Coast rivers do respond to heavy precipitation, smaller streams like the Kilchis, North Fork Nehalem, Necanicum and Three Rivers are all the best bets in getting the job done. Keep in mind that these rivers fished well at mid-week when steelhead counts should have been excellent. Results were not what we had hoped and hatchery opportunity for quality fish should go downhill from here. It is quite possible that many of the hatchery fish in the systems now will seek smaller tributaries to spawn in as they are all nearing sexual maturity. Fresh fish will continue to come into the river systems however and the wild component of the run will likely begin to gain in momentum.

If precipitation does hit on Thursday afternoon, larger systems like the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers will likely remain un-fishable well into the weekend. The upper Trask at the Dam Hole is an exception however flows have been so high for so long that the viability of this spot is less than exciting.

Seas are expected to continue to be big making crabbing and sturgeon fishing in the bay a poor

prospect. Two lives were lost in 3 days on Tillamook Bay last week. A sand shrimp pumper died trying to swim for shore after their boat escaped from them and a father perished after only having a single life-jacket they he forfeited to his son. The New Year is a good time to have the marine deputy check your safety equipment on board. Life jackets do exactly what they are supposed to do! Save lives!

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Bottomfishing re-opened at the first of the year, but high winds and waves kept anglers at bay and huge seas would keep anxious bottomfishers off the ocean recently. The ODFW hopes a six-rockfish bag limit for 2006 will allow recreational fishermen to keep fishing without the mid-season shut-down necessitated in 2005 to protect dwindling numbers. Lingcod aren't effected; the limit remains two fish per day of 24 inches or better. Bottomfishing and ocean crabbing is expected to be good when seas subside.

Crabbing in the bays and estuaries has slowed with the influx of fresh water. The exception is Netarts Bay which, without a significant river feeding it, maintains its salinity, hence, the Dungeness remain available.

It's worth mentioning again, as we do every year, that divers and bait are a bad idea anywhere wild steelhead are mixed with those of hatchery origin. Steelhead tend to take the bait deeply when fished on this fashion, causing an inordinate rate of fatalities in those which must be released. The future of the wild fish depends in great part on our effort to protect it.

Debris and logs were reported earlier this week at the Alsea River along with a couple of boathouses which were seen drifting downstream. **Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** comments, " ... as you might expect, nothing to report. My tip of the week is for anglers to start their steelhead fishing high up in the bigger rivers like the Alsea - North Fork by the hatchery. It will be crowded there, but that where the best fishing will be until the main river drops into shape. Another place to try would be Fall Creek on the Alsea. Be a lot less people there, and some good water to fish. Another river I like to fish when the big rivers are blown out is the Big Elk above Elk City. A dirt road follow the river for several miles so I like to check out as many spots as possible until I find the fish. Also steelhead like to travel close to the banks in high water conditions so adjust your fishing accordingly."

The lower Umpqua was still running high and brown mid-week. With a moderation in the weather, sturgeon fishing should turn on here.

January and February are typically the best months for steelhead entering the Coos and Coquille, so look for strong runs in the next several weeks.

The Rogue River remains blown and looks like it'll take a while to recover. If the rain this week is significant, it will push steelheading even further into January. When water conditions drop and clear sufficiently to allow, plunkers on the lower river will be the first to encounter fresh steelhead as this run is due to crank up and deliver.

The Chetco was a mess as recently as Wednesday this week as it swelled to near flood stage. With the run well underway here, steelhead are passing by unmolested at this time.

Travelers can get through on highway 101 again, thanks to hard-working ODOT employees workers who opened one lane Thursday morning following the rain-triggered slide which had the road closed completely.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – The Deschutes offers nothing to anglers at this time. The

Crooked River remains blown out. Bull trout are cooperating with long-riders on the Metolius. Fly fishers returning to the Owyhee are catching trout, but the hazards of flash-flooding, rock and mud slides might be reason enough to put off a foray for a while.

**SW Washington -**

**Salmon/Steelhead -**

**Kalama River Winter Steelhead**

A lot of water and good numbers of fish. This past week (Friday and Tuesday), 200 hatchery winter steelhead were recycled to the lower river, while 27 wild winter and 7 wild summer steelhead was passed upstream of Kalama Falls Hatchery (KFH). Also over 300 hatchery coho were handled. Most fishing is restricted to the deadline and beginner's hole when the river is this high. (source: Chris Wagemann, WDFW Fish Biologist)

**Salmon Creek (Clark County)** - Good numbers of steelhead are reported present but water is high, muddy, and flowing fast.

Comparison of 2004 and 2005 hatchery winter steelhead returns through December. In general, this year's return is about half of last year to date.

Station	2004	2005
Grays River	300	32
Elochoman	251	115
Cowlitz Trout	126	416
Cowlitz Salmon	2,067	554
Kalama Falls	727	289
Lewis	263	143
Merwin Dam	1,016	903
Skamania	525	90

**Kalama River** - lots of water and good numbers of fish. This past week (Friday(12/31) and Tuesday(1/03)), 157 "fresh" and 108 "recapture" hatchery winter steelhead were recycled to the lower river, while 23 wild winter and 7 wild summer steelhead was passed upstream of Kalama Falls Hatchery.

**STURGEON -**

The area **above Wauna** is open between January 1 through July 31 to sturgeon retention on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays only. Catch and released is allowed on non-retention days. The area **below Wauna** will re-open to sturgeon retention January 1 through April 30, 2006, 7-days per week, minimum 42" maximum 60".

The area above **Bonneville Dam** also re-opens to sturgeon retention January 1, 2006, as per 2005-2006 fishing pamphlet.

**Trout -**

**Klineline Pond** - 28 bank anglers kept 42 rainbows. Water is real high - best fishing is using bait in the swimming area. Planted with 1,000 catchable size rainbows on Dec. 27.

## **Smelt -**

**Mainstem Columbia near Cathlamet** - Commercial fishers landed 485 pounds of smelt from Dec. 28-30. More fish were landed last week than all of the 2005 season (100 pounds).

Effective January 1, 2006 to March 31, 2006 the Cowlitz River only is open for smelt dipping on Saturdays from 6AM to 10PM, daily limit of ten-pounds per person, no license is required. All other Washington tributaries are closed to smelt dipping.

The mainstem Columbia River will remain open 7 days a week, 24-hours a day for recreational smelt dipping. Daily limit is 25-pounds per person per day, no license is required. However, a scarcity of bank access limits fishing pressure.

**Cowlitz River** - Starting Jan. 7, the popular fishery on the Cowlitz is scheduled to run from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. each Saturday through March 31, with a daily catch limit of 10 pounds per person.

**All other tributaries to the Columbia River** - Remain closed to smelt fishing until further notice.

Trout plants: **January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>**

## **Species Number Fish per pound Hatchery Notes**

### **Cowlitz County**

#### **Horseshoe Lake**

Rainbow 16 0.20 Goldendale Broodstock- 5.0 lbs each

Rainbow 4 0.10 Goldendale Broodstock- 10 lbs each

#### **Sacajawea Lake**

Rainbow 123 0.20 Goldendale Broodstock- 5.0 lbs each

Rainbow 36 0.10 Goldendale Broodstock- 10 lbs each

### **Klickitat County**

#### **Rowland Lake**

Rainbow 100 0.20 Goldendale Broodstock- 5.0 lbs each

Rainbow 75 0.10 Goldendale Broodstock- 10 lbs each

#### **Spearfish Lake**

Rainbow 90 0.20 Goldendale Broodstock- 5.0 lbs each

Rainbow 25 0.10 Goldendale Broodstock- 10 lbs each

**Northwest Trout** - The 2006 rounds of trout stocking start on Monday, January 9th. These plants include "catchable-sized" trout of eight to ten inches plus some foot-long in the valley locations with the exception of Willamina. Look for a fresh fish infusion of State-raised rainbows at Junction City Pond, Walling Pond, Walter Wirth Lake and Huddleston Pond in the Willamette Zone. Cleawox Lake, Dune Lake and Munsel Lake will be stocked in the Northwest Zone

**Southwest Trout** - I know ... we don't usually report on trout prospects on the South coast, but this is a fishery that'll be available if rivers are blown. Well, probably. In any event, Lakes in Coos County will be receiving some dandies, 14 to 16 inches. Look for them starting Monday, January 9th at Saunders Lake, Empire Lake and Powers Pond.

## **Reader Email**

"Hey there, I know you already know this, but just in case...fish are in the river. Two Steelhead were reported caught earlier today (Wednesday) but it is only word of mouth at this point and I didn't witness them on the hook. I do know that fish are being taken each week, even in the high water conditions! The water is dropping a bit, but still quite muddy. If you cast too far out,

you may have the tussle of your life as you try to beach a 30'-50'+ tree trunk as they're still floating by at breakneck speed. But, oh boy, what fun they are to play with, especially if you're lucky enough to bring one to the bank!!! Wear your lifejackets, though...They'll pull you in the water, fer sher! At the mouth of the Clackamas, water levels have dropped from 32' 4 days ago, to about 26' today. That is pretty significant yet there is still room for improvement. Rain is predicted again, starting tomorrow (Today as you read this) so we'll just have to wait and see what Mother Nature has in store for us. The die hards who show up each and every day and week, all 2-4 of them... are sticking to their guns and picking up a fish or two EACH WEEK!"



"Even in the high muddy conditions. They are burning up some hours, though. If you can do that, I would say go burn a few! Get out there with some good sandwiches and a good book and see what happens. Make sure your bell is loud enough, however, and things will no doubt happen. The main run is still a week or two away but there are Winter Steelhead out there for the taking. Below is a link to NOAA's Water level report at the mouth of the Clackamas. It is a good indicator of true water levels at the mouth of the Clack and of when the bite will truly be on! Enjoy":

<http://ahps2.wrh.noaa.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=pqr&gage=coco3&view=1,1,1,1,1>

Ken also sent the picture below of the approach to Meldrum Bar, taken New Years Eve day.



Write to the TGF staff:

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### **Random Links**

Officials with the Washington state Department of Natural Resources list a 5.7-acre lake about 25 miles northeast of Seattle as "Bevis Lake." In Census Bureau records, it's entered as "Butthead Lake." Tales from the outdoors strange but true:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051229/OUTDOORS/512290361/1034>

British scientists observe global warming:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/4532344.stm>

Oregon's premium albacore hooks a growing number of enthusiasts around the country:

<http://www.oregonschoice.com/articles.php>

**Weekly Quote** – "Fish sense, applied in the field, is what the old Zen masters would call enlightenment: simply the ability to see what's right there in front of you without having to sift through a lot of thoughts and theories and, yes, expensive fishing tackle." ~ John Gierach

**GOOD LUCK!**