

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 13th, – October 19th, 2006**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- After several weeks of catch and release fishing only, the Columbia River from the Wauna Powerlines to Bonneville Dam re-opened for catch and keep sturgeon 3 days per week. October 5th was the first of the 3-day opener and anglers did as well as could be expected. Large keepers were common and shaker action was fantastic for anglers using smelt and shad strips for bait. The fast water near the deadline produced the best results for keepers but anglers working downstream found ample opportunity to tangle with shaker sturgeon. This fishery will remain open for the 3 day per week retention period until December 31st or until the quota of 12,000 fish has been attained. Smelt is the top bait but with a small run last spring, finding the bait can be challenging.

Catch and release fishing for salmon in the Bonneville area remains very productive and effort if light. Cooler water temperatures and the presence of more resident spawners will make this fishery viable for another week or two. Backrolled plugs takes the majority of fish but backbounced or backrolled eggs will also produce results.

Steelhead passage is slowing at the lower Columbia impoundments indicating fish are moving into upper Columbia tributaries in preparation for over-wintering. The mouth of the Deschutes is slowing as a result.

Salmon anglers in the upper reaches of the Columbia are still finding a few bright Chinook and backrolled plugs are taking fish in the Hanford Reach. Weekend crowds drew season highs for catch and effort.

Although daily salmon counts are declining, salmon continue to move up the Willamette with 1,776 Chinook and 3,668 coho having crossed the falls as of October 4th. The water temperature is down to 59 degrees while flows are increasing. Sturgeon fishing is finally improving with a few keepers coming from just below the Falls.

The Sandy River is at its lowest and is running crystal clear, offering little to anglers. There are plenty of Chinook and coho showing at the mouth that are ready to enter when precipitation hits.

Coho are numerous at the mouth of the Clackamas. There are good numbers in the river as well, but it will be slow fishing until it rains. Summer steelhead fishing is less frustrating and more productive. Eagle creek holds many mostly dark coho in the deeper holes. Report snaggers at 1-800-452-7888.

Steelhead are being caught on the North Santiam from Fishermen's Bend to Packsaddle Park. A few steelhead are being taken below Foster Dam on the South Santiam.

Detroit Reservoir, Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake are scheduled to be planted with trout.

Northwest – Tillamook continues to be one of the most consistent fisheries on the Oregon Coast. Although seaweed continues to hamper success, anglers can find biting fish near the tide changes- both high slack and low slack. Weed subsides long enough to effectively work spinners or herring. Fair bites have occurred on the upper and lower bay but softer tides will make the lower bay and ocean the best options. If ocean fishing is permitted, early morning is the best choice for the salt

water angler.

Quality 5 year-old fish are still making a strong showing in the Tillamook catches. About every 3rd fish averages close to 30 pounds or larger. Tidewater anglers are posting sporadic results with the Trask tidewater one of the best options.

The Nestucca River remains a strong option with good numbers of fish present from the strong weekend tide series. Biters may be more challenging to find as tides weaken but moving around more and fishing effectively near the last part of outgoing tide should pay dividends.

The Salmon River near Lincoln City is fading but fish should still be available through the first significant rain.

Chinook fishing has been very slow in tidewater on the Siletz River.

It's slow going at the Yaquina River, but trollers are picking up a few on spinners or plug-cut herring.

Southwest – Alsea Chinook fishing is slow but a few are being taken daily.

Fall Chinook are available in Siuslaw tidewater where trollers are putting long days in an effort to take one.

The occasional sturgeon has been taken recently on the lower Umpqua by frustrated Chinook fishermen but it's slow this time of year. Spinners are taking both coho and Chinook in the spotty Winchester Bay fishery.

The bite has turned on in Rogue Bay with good catches of both coho and Chinook. Early mornings have been best with many boats limiting by lunchtime. Spinners have been the ticket, pink for coho, green for Chinook. The bay fishery will be over with the next decent rainfall so get there if you can. Summer steelheading is fair in the Agness area. Work started this week on the removal of Savage Rapids Dam which will aid in upriver fish passage.

Anglers are making decent Chinook catches out of Brookings with 30-pounders coming in daily. The occasional 40-pounder is being witnessed and one recently which scaled 51 pounds.

Southwest Washington- Most SW Washington streams are slowing for salmon and steelhead. The exceptions are the Cowlitz and North Fork of the Lewis Rivers. Coho and summer steelhead remain an option on the Cowlitz while coho anglers are tying into fair numbers of late run Lewis River fish. Fresh fish will be more difficult to come by as the week progresses.

Eastern - Steelhead are moving upriver on the Deschutes with fish being taken up to Warm Springs as the run winds down. Numbers have definitely dropped this week however. Trout fishing on the lower river is improving seasonally. Great Caddis hatches are allowing effective fly fishing although nymphs are also taking good numbers.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The big news of the week is the recent re-opener of the sport fishery from Bonneville Dam downstream to Tongue Point. Although it sounds good, the bulk of the lower river fishery is done but anglers will still try (and some will succeed) for chinook from Troutdale to Bonneville. The Bonneville stretch will be the most productive for backtrollers working plugs in the swifter current. Historically, this can be a very productive time to catch the more resident Upriver Brights. There will be a mix of dark and bright fish available with a noticeable

downturn in quality in the coming weeks. Action should be good enough to warrant a trip however and with the weather we have been having, what better way to spend the day? The weekend check for the few catch and release boats participating in the fishery was not impressive the very few boats were checked.

The sturgeon fishery however did produce some decent results although like most times in the gorge, the bite was centralized versus widespread. Some groups of anglers did quite well with numerous fish over 50 inches reported and the shaker action was respectable too. Gorge boats checked in over a keeper per boat and averaged nearly 10 shakers per vessel. Bank anglers didn't do as good as expected but still posted nearly 70 keepers for just over 400 rods. Do you even know what 400 bank rods looks like? I guess these people were anticipating good fishing! Troutdale boats tallied 8 keepers for 24 boats and the Portland to Longview stretch showed an impressive 12 keepers for 97 boats. Impressive if you put it into perspective on how well these boats have done in recent years this time of year.

But hey, we're fishing the Columbia again.....!

Further upriver, the John Day Pool fishery is beginning to kick in. Numbers in the sport fishery are becoming respectable and it's only going to get better from here. The weekend check was as follows:

John Day Pool (Columbia River above John Day Dam and John Day Arm): Weekly checking showed three adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus two unclipped steelhead released for 32 bank rods; and 11 adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus five unclipped steelhead released for 39 boats.

Most boats participating in this fishery are plug trollers. Stay tuned as this fishery lights up!

Crabbing in the lower river is not getting too much attention and reports are light. Success should be picking up however and the soft tide series this weekend should bode well for crabbers working lower Desdemona Sands and Buoys 20 and 22.

The Guide's Forecast – Although it is unlikely that the sturgeon fishing will get any better, it should stay consistent. Gorge anglers will witness the best opportunities and although boats anglers may have the upper hand, success rates for bank anglers should be respectable too. Smelt is the key bait to have and with the competition you may witness this weekend, it may be good to tip your baits with sand shrimp or even salmon eggs! Faster water will likely yield larger fish and there are still some oversized fish in the area.

Salmon anglers will want to target the fast water in search of brighter fish. Backrolled Kwikfish will boast the biggest numbers but experimental anglers backbouncing eggs should do well too. The bite may be short lived over the course of the day so be sure to utilize first light as best as you can. Fish from the deadline to the Shad Rack with the Oak Tree Hole producing steady results.

Although still weeks away from peaking, the John Day troll fishery for steelhead may be worth pursuing. It's a simple fishery but keep in mind you don't want to burn out before it peaks.

Mainstem John Day steelhead should become a more viable option as well in the coming weeks as fish are clearly traveling up the mainstem to find their wintering grounds.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Chinook counts at the Falls neared 1,800 on October 5th with coho numbers topping the 3,800 mark. Summer steelhead will continue to be counted through October and with steelies trickling over Willamette Falls in single and double digits, will finish near 20,000, a fair year.

Many of the steelhead that are over the Falls are now in the Santiam system where they'll remain in the upper system until spawning in January and February. Recycling of summers downstream to run again on the North and South Santiams is continuing.

Steelheading is winding down on the McKenzie although fish continue to be taken below Leeburg Dam.

The Guide's Forecast – While effort is light, a few coho have been caught in the Meldrum Bar area. Anglers focus on them in the tributaries to a much greater extent than on the lower Willamette. The majority of coho run up that side of the Willamette on their way to the Clackamas mouth.

Concentrate efforts for summers on the upper stretches of the North Santiam. Fishermen's Bend to Packsaddle is yielding fair to good results as fish move both up and downstream to determine where they'll want to spawn this winter.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Steelheading has slowed on the Clackamas which, combined with the fair to good coho population disinterested in biting, makes this system one pass on until we get some precipitation. Anglers so inclined might try small egg clusters either drifted or under a float. Coho are still stacked at the mouth, rolling and mostly laughing at anglers' frustration in trying to entice them.

The Sandy River holds slightly better promise for a coho hookup even in low, clear water as the mid-fifty-degree water temperature is more conducive to encouraging a bite. Anglers won't have to deal with crowds because the slow fishing, water conditions and coho that are scattered throughout the system has thinned out hopefuls. Fishing down low holds as much chance as up at Bonnie Lure.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Recent weather and good chinook action has most Tillamook anglers wanting to write a book..... Calm seas and high 70's make some wonder why they put their children back in school. Is it really fall? Starting in the salt, salmon action has been sporadic (as usual) but early morning bites were impressive on 10/9 and 10/10. Most anglers have switched back to targeting salmon along the south jetty although the north tip is still producing some fish-particularly close to low slack. I fished the same group of guys from the Nehalem River Inn (go to www.nehalemriverinn.com) for 1½ days (they wanted to golf the second day) going 8 for 10 overall with one wild coho (lost) in the mix. The first day we started in the upper bay trolling spinners as there had been some good action there over the weekend. The onset of the weaker tide series however slowed migration (of fish and seaweed) into the upper bay but some fish were still being caught close to low slack. We soon headed for the ocean on the report Chris Vertopoulos started the day with a double! After getting herring at Garibaldi Marina, we headed out only to realize we were nearly at low slack on the north jetty. We saw some fish on and decided to drop our baits in and slow troll against the slowing tide and hit our first fish between the coast guard tower and Lyster's corner. The second fish came just around the corner, up the bay from that but the tide had already started to come in and so did the seaweed. So, we headed for the ocean and dropped in the baits

and headed west towards the green buoy and not 5 minutes into the troll, we got our third fish. All this time, we were seeing an occasional net fly as well. We then spent the next several hours just enjoying the soft ocean and bluebird weather. Getting bored, we headed back in to the upper bay for a high slack opportunity near the mouth of the Wilson River where there had been fair catches in recent days during this time of the tide. Not long into the troll, we hit our 4th fish going 100% on the strike to land ratio. The next day we decided to launch out of Garibaldi and headed straight to the ocean for the first light bite. Well, it didn't come! We did manage an early fish but only saw a handful of others caught. Although there was some seaweed present, it wasn't nearly as bad as inside the bay. We continued to troll west into the deeper water where the commercial fleet has set up shop. You have to figure if the commercial trollers are there in the numbers they are (and they are there in force) there has to be some fish available for catching. We took our second fish in about 53 feet of water just west of the green buoy. We then turned north and caught our third just NW of the entrance of Tillamook Bay in about 78 feet of water. Keep in mind we had most of our gear near the bottom of the ocean. These fish go deep soon after first light as that is where the feed concentrates when the sun rises. After making a big loop back towards the entrance of the bay for low slack, we entered into the mouth with a double (one coho/ one chinook) losing both fish. We finally ended our day near the coast guard tower with our 4th chinook and saw a few others caught during the tide change. On the 10th, of our 4 bites, 2 came on a whole herring and I was just fishing the whole herring on one rod. We fished the whole herring the second day and that was the only rod that didn't get bit!?

Inside the bay, the seaweed is a little more tolerable on the smaller tide exchanges and the bites are coming at 2 distinct times of the tide. First light brings the peak outgoing tide where seaweed is bad even in the oyster house hole. As upper bay trollers near low slack there has been fish taken in the slot near the mouth of the Wilson River and along the picket fence. The slot near "Ray's Place" piling has also given up a few fish near low slack and the first part of incoming where weeds are settling into the bay bottom instead of fouling gear. The second bite of the day is coming at high slack along the picket fence in the deep slot on the east side of the channel. It's important to keep those spinners (or herring) fishing deep and weed free when this short term opportunity exists. Best colors for the early morning have been the white with lemon-lime tip/white back or red/white with the white back. When the sun gets higher in the sky, the brass red tip with red beads has been performing the best for me but other guides are doing well with green tipped rainbow spinners. Several guides are also having success on the chartreuse green dot spinner but with red beads.

Many Nehalem River guides are finding themselves participating in the Tillamook fishery because of the slow catches up there. There are a lot of fish present higher in the tidewater section of the river and bobber anglers are catching a few. Coho are jumping in force as well. Lower bay trollers- both spinner and herring, are not producing outstanding catches. It seems fish are moving through the lower estuary rather quickly not giving many an opportunity to catch. This system will remain open to hatchery coho through October but wild fish are beginning to make up the bulk of the present population.

Tidewater sections of the district seem to be a hit or miss opportunity. The Trask and adjacent sloughs are producing some fair catches but the bite seems to be inconsistent. Fish are available from the 2-bit hole downstream with the Hospital Hole and Piling Hole producing some of the best action. Some fish are beginning to color but the bucks should still cut nice as long as they are not too dark.

The Nestucca River is still a productive choice but anglers have to hunt down their prey. Chinook are well distributed in tidewater from Riverbend Lodge to the Pacific City Boat Ramp. Freshest fish are available closer to the estuary. Sculpin and smolts continue to plague bobber tossers so plan on bringing a lot of bait and you should tip your eggs with sand shrimp.

Although the Salmon River is still witnessing a lot of effort, catches have dropped off and should continue to do so. With the waning tide series, not many new fish are likely to enter into tidewater where bank anglers can access them.

Crabbing is still fair at best in Tillamook Bay and seals are having a hay day when fish is being used as bait. Netarts and Nestucca estuaries have tapered somewhat but remain the best option for someone willing to put forth the effort.

The Guide's Forecast – With Tillamook the highlight fishery, look to the soft tides as a favorable option for trolling herring in the lower bay and ocean. The ocean and weather forecast look really favorable for ocean fishing. Here it is:

FRI

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

FRI NIGHT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BECOMING NW 5 TO 10 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 5 FT.

SAT

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BECOMING W IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 5 FT.

SAT NIGHT

S WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF RAIN AFTER MIDNIGHT.

SUN

SW WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 8 FT.

MON

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 6 FT.

Keep in mind the ocean is a dynamic ecosystem and weather can change quickly. The weather on the 11th was great but there were still some LARGE rollers out there that could have caused some trouble on the bar if you weren't paying attention!

The best bite usually occurs in the early morning but don't be afraid to fish with confidence amongst the deep water commercial trollers just in sight- there are fish there! Chinook may be a bit off the bottom first thing in the morning but by 8:00 am, get those baits soaking deep! If you have enough rods in the boat, rig both whole and plug cut herring. I have been using 50 pound Trilene Big Game line with 4/0 and 5/0 Mustad stainless steel hooks. Our strike to land ratio has been outstanding!

Upper bay trollers may get some brief flurries of activity but most of the biters will get culled from the fishery near the mouth or in the ocean. Focus your efforts on the tide changes and seaweed should not be the issue it has been earlier in the week.

Nestucca anglers are better off fishing near the mouth of the bay where the weaker tides will bring in motivated biters. Herring trollers at the mouth should do the best on incoming and the first and last part of outgoing tide. Don't hesitate to target these kings in 4 to 5 foot of water. You just have to use light lead to get it away from the boat at the mouth.

Crabbing is best in Netarts Bay where anglers don't try and double dip. Nehalem Bay is fair for keepers and there are some softshells in the mix. The softer tides will allow crabbers to work their gear closer to the ocean as crabs should be more active in the lower exchanges.

Central & South Coast Reports – Chinook fishing remains slow at the Siletz, although a few are being taken every day. The fish are moving upriver but are likely to remain in tidewater until the next rainfall. Wrapped Kwikfish and green-bladed spinners seem to be the top producers although the bobber and egg devotees are landing some as well.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754 6411) reports, "Chinook fishing on the central coast was also so last week. The good news is crabbing is still very good and many of them are in the jumbo range."

Mild tides favor crabbing in the bays and estuaries. It has been good at Yaquina and the lower Alsea. Beaches remain open for razor clamming South of Tillamook head, but there will be no clam tides for a couple of weeks.

Trolled spinners or plug-cut herring are taking a few Chinook above Sawyers on the Yaquina. It's not hot, by any means, but is worthwhile, especially combined with a crabbing trip.

The forecast for is offshore conditions allowing boats launching from Depoe Bay and Yaquina to safely get out. Warm water is close enough to shore that tuna fishing may be possible. According to the ODFW, 2006 is the second-best year on record for tuna catches with an average of three per anglers and sometimes with in 20 miles of port. Bottom fishing is starting to slow although that just means it'll take longer to limit. Offshore Chinook fishing is fair with coho closed.

Siuslaw tidewater is heating up with the ODFW fish checker reporting 75 Chinook returned to the dock on Saturday, October 8th. There are lots of boats trying on the weekends here.

Trollers are putting in their time on Winchester Bay with fishing slow to fair. Spinners seem to be most effective for a mix of Chinook and coho.

Coos and Coquille tidewater continues to provide worthwhile Fall Chinook fishing. Trollers are fishing plug-cut herring to take fish.

Rogue River anglers are making good half-pounder catches now. Fly-fishing for them is as effective as hardware. Adult steelhead catches have improved in the Grants Pass stretch while slowing down in the upper river with the water cooling. Steelheaders in the upper, flies-only section will find nymphs and egg imitations most effective. The artificial fly restriction will be lifted on the 1st of November. More coho are in the lower river than Chinook and silvers are dominating the salmon take and anglers are often hooking several in the course of a day. Chinook are predominant from Gold beach into the bay. The increase in Rogue Bay Chinook catches has been an encouragement to trollers who have been hoping for decent salmon action this Fall. Recently, numerous coho and Chinook have come over the gunwales as catches here heat up. Spinners have been taking the most fish. While river anglers state-wide are looking forward to the autumn rains to start, fishers here are hoping it'll hold off a while. Precipitation will empty the estuary, drawing fish upriver. Chinook are also being intercepted near the mouth of Indian Creek on their way to the hatchery facility located there.

Chetco anglers are taking Chinook on anchovy-spinner combos with upper tidewater fishers finding action with bobber & bait.

Chinook fishing on the Elk and Sixes starts to shine in November and continues to produce into

December but success here is dependent upon precipitation.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754 6411) shares this first-hand report: " ... fished the lower Deschutes this past weekend for steelhead. The action on the lower twenty-four miles really slowed down this weekend. I am not sure if it was because of the harvest moon or if most of the fish are headed further up river or if many of the lower river steelhead decide to leave the Deschutes and head up the Columbia to their native river. The entire lower Deschutes now has steelhead as friends of mine are consistently hooking steelhead just below Trout Creek.

Northwest Trout – Detroit Reservoir, Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake were stocked with 'catchable-sized' (8 to 10 inch) rainbows this week. Fishing at Detroit is reported to be fair to good, but has been drawn down in anticipation of Fall and winter rain. Some of the boat ramps may not be useable.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report:

North Puget Sound

It's been a tricky fall for **salmon** anglers. Despite strong **coho** returns to some of the area's rivers, catch rates are way down on the saltwater. "Clearly this is one of those years when the coho are lock-jawed," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fisheries biologist. "In most marine areas, coho just aren't biting."

The limited harvest was evident at the recent Everett Coho Derby. A total of 3,046 adult and youth tickets were sold for the event, but only 410 silvers were weighed. Of the anglers who did catch fish, R. Scott Slaughter turned out to be the derby's big winner. Slaughter hauled in a 16.82-pound coho, taking home the \$2,500 first prize in the adult division. Frank Hannon, who weighed in a 16.79-pound coho, finished second and pocketed \$1,500, while Debbie Olson's 16.73-pound silver was good enough for third place and \$1,000. In the kids' division, Mathew Klemm took first with a 14.21-pound coho.

Coho fishing might be slow, but anglers in the region now have the option of turning their attention to **chinook**. A seven-month-long selective fishery for hatchery winter blackmouth is under way in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner). The fishery, which began Oct. 1 and runs through the month of April, should be a good opportunity for anglers in the coming weeks, said Thiesfeld. Anglers can keep up to two hatchery chinook per day, so long as the fish measure at least 22 inches in length. Wild chinook salmon, which have an intact adipose fin, cannot be brought aboard the boat.

"According to some reports, there are a lot of shakers around," said Thiesfeld, who recommends using large spoons or plugs to reduce the catch of those sub-legals. "Anglers who hook a shaker need to properly handle those fish before releasing them."

Elsewhere, anglers in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands) can keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit, while anglers in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) can take home one chinook as part of the two-salmon daily limit in that area beginning Oct. 16.

Freshwater fisheries also are slow for coho. The Snohomish and portions of the Stillaguamish, Snoqualmie, Skykomish and Skagit rivers are currently open for salmon fishing. Chad Jackson, WDFW fish biologist, said anglers on the Snohomish River haven't had much success with silvers. "There's plenty of coho in the Snohomish but they just aren't biting," he said.

Anglers fishing the Snohomish River, as well as the Skykomish, Snoqualmie and Stillaguamish rivers, have a daily limit of two salmon measuring at least 12 inches but must release chinook and **pink** salmon. Anglers on the Skagit River are allowed three salmon daily measuring at least 12 inches, but must release chinook. Anglers should check WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for more information on those and other fisheries in the region.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

The first **razor clam** dig of the fall season will get under way Friday, Oct. 6, on evening tides at all five of Washington's ocean beaches. WDFW approved the digs at Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis and Mocrocks beaches after a series of marine toxin tests confirmed that the clams there are safe to eat. The National Park Service approved the digs at Kalaloch Beach, which is located within Olympic National Park, to coincide with those at the other coastal beaches.

All five beaches will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 6-8. A fourth evening of digging is also scheduled Monday, Oct. 9, at Twin Harbors and Long Beach only. Digging will be restricted to the hours between noon and midnight each day at all five beaches.

"Overall, razor clam populations are up on the beaches south of Grays Harbor and down some compared to last year on those beaches to the north," said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager. "This will likely mean more digging opportunities at Long Beach and Twin Harbors during the 2006-07 season."

Harvesters are allowed to take no more than 15 razor clams and must keep the first 15 they dig, regardless of size or condition. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container. A license is required for anyone age 15 or older. Any 2006 annual shellfish/seaweed combination fishing license is still valid. Another option is a razor-clam only license available in annual or three-day only versions. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/>.

Evening low tides during the dig will occur at 6:39 p.m. Friday, Oct. 6 (-0.6 ft.); 7:28 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 7 (-1.3 ft.); 8:16 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 8 (-1.6 ft.); and 9:03 p.m. Monday, Oct. 9 (-1.6 ft.). One final weekend of ocean **salmon** fishing remains as the "LaPush Late Season Area" fishery continues. Fisheries managers recently announced that two chinook may be kept as part of the two-salmon daily limit. This season runs through Oct. 8. See WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for details on the area's boundaries. While Marine Area 5 (Sekiu to Pillar Point) closed for all salmon fishing Sept. 30, Marine Area 6 (East Strait of Juan de Fuca) opened for salmon retention Oct. 1. However, recent WDFW creel counts have been showing virtually no fish being caught at the Port Angeles count sites. "It's just been a difficult season for salmon anglers," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "The fish have shown up in certain areas, but aren't always biting."

Unfortunately it's the same story around inland waters, with catch counts showing few salmon being caught in marine areas 11 (Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge), 12 (Hood Canal) and 13 (South Puget Sound). "Some rain would help bring the fish into Puget Sound and area rivers," said Thiesfeld. "But given the lateness of the season, they may be more interested in spawning than feeding at this point."

New fishing opportunities opening in Puget Sound include chum retention in all of Hood Canal beginning Oct. 16. The forecast for chum in the canal is up slightly this year over last, said Thiesfeld. **Blackmouth** fishing also opens Oct. 16 in Marine Area 10. He noted that Manchester and Allen Bank in Kitsap County are popular spots to sink a line.

More area rivers also open for fall fishing Oct. 16. The Dungeness River in Clallam County (from the mouth to Gold Creek) opens for **trout** and **coho** only, while the Humptulips River in Grays Harbor opens from the mouth to Ocean Beach Road for trout and salmon. A section of the Hoh River from Willoughby Creek to Morgan's Crossing boat launch also opens for salmon fishing Oct. 16. In Pacific County, anglers can begin salmon fishing the Willapa River from the Highway 6 Bridge to Fork Creek. Anglers are advised to check WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for details before fishing these waters.

Recreational **crab** fishing remains open in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu and Pillar Point) and 13 (South Puget Sound) seven days a week through Feb. 28. WDFW will announce this month if crab fishing will reopen in other waters where the catch has not met area quotas.

Southwest Washington:

Anglers still looking for a chance to take home a **sturgeon** this year will have a great opportunity to do so when the retention fishery from the Wauna powerlines to Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River resumes Oct. 5. After a two-month hiatus, anglers can again keep one legal-size white sturgeon per day in those waters Thursday through Saturday each week until the area harvest guideline is reached. That could take through the end of the year, given that more than 9,400 sturgeon remain to be caught under the area's 12,800-fish annual guideline, said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist.

"I can't remember when this many sturgeon were available for the fall fishery," Hymer said. "Fishing should be good from Camas up to Bonneville Dam. Bank anglers fishing below the dam will have their best chance of the year to catch a legal-size white sturgeon."

"Keepers" must measure at least 42 inches but no more than 60 inches. Anglers are limited to one sturgeon per day and five per year. "If you still have notches left on your catch record card for sturgeon, this is a great opportunity to fill them up," Hymer said.

Meanwhile, **salmon** anglers fishing above Bonneville Dam have a chance to fill a few notches, too, now that chinook retention is once again allowed from the dam up to the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco. Those waters were reopened to catch-and-keep chinook fishing after fish counts revealed that more chinook salmon have been passing over Bonneville Dam since mid-September than expected, said Bill Tweit, WDFW Columbia River policy leader.

"Anglers fishing above Bonneville Dam didn't get much of a chance to take home chinook salmon earlier in the season," Tweit said. "The additional fish we're seeing now give us a chance to provide more fishing time, without exceeding conservation guidelines or compromising the commercial fishery in the lower river."

Tweit noted that anglers must still release any chinook salmon they catch downstream from Bonneville Dam to Rocky Point/Tongue Point near Astoria. Anglers fishing in that area may, however, retain hatchery coho and steelhead, which can be identified by a missing adipose fin. But some of the best action for those fish has been on the tributaries, where late-run hatchery coho are overlapping with fall chinook runs, Hymer said. While late coho runs are expected to be smaller than the early run, he said bright fish are expected in the Washougal, Lewis, Kalama, Cowlitz, Elochoman and Klickitat rivers. Fishery managers are also expecting 12,000 late-run chinook to return to the North Fork Lewis River in the days ahead. The best place to intercept these hatchery fish is at the Cedar Creek Hole near the hatchery, Hymer said.

On the Cowlitz River, creel checkers counted 167 boat anglers with 30 adult chinook, 17 hatchery coho and 11 hatchery steelhead during the week ending Oct. 1. Bank angling has been slow from the Interstate 5 bridge downstream (except at the mouth of the Toutle River), but creelers counted

nonetheless 14 hatchery coho, 10 hatchery steelhead, two chinook and a number of sea-run cutthroat trout among the 142 bank anglers checked on the Cowlitz that week. Bank anglers also picked up seven fall chinook on the Klickitat River, where 16 boat anglers added another 11 fish to the tally.

Anglers should be aware that chinook-release rules are now in effect in the following waters to protect spawning salmon:

- Elochoman River, upstream from the Highway 4 Bridge
- North Fork Toutle from the Kidd Valley Road Bridge near Highway 504 upstream
- Green River
- Cowlitz River from Blue Creek to Mill Creek
- Kalama River from the natural gas pipeline crossing upstream
- Washougal River from the Little Washougal River upstream
- White Salmon River from the posted markers half a mile above the Highway 14 Bridge upstream

In addition, all fishing is now closed from Colvin Creek (near the salmon hatchery) upstream to Merwin Dam on the Lewis River. Night closures went into effect Oct. 1 at Drano Lake, where all non-tribal fishing is now prohibited on Wednesdays. Additional regulations are described in WDFW's Fishing in Washington rule pamphlet, available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>. Meanwhile, Tacoma Power employees resumed transporting fish to Lake Scanewa during the last week of September with the releases of 1,285 coho adults, 175 coho jacks and one spring chinook adult into the Cowlitz River at the Day Use Site. In addition, they released 105 coho adults and 23 coho jacks into the Cipsus River above the mouth of Yellowjacket Creek during the week. A total of 699 coho adults, 46 coho jacks, one cutthroat trout, 518 fall chinook adults and 35 jacks were released into Mayfield Lake at Ike Kinswa Park boat launch during the week.

Anglers casting for **trout** should be aware that Goose Lake was planted with 1,545 cutthroat averaging nearly a pound each on Sept. 25. Another 334 one-pounders went to the South Lewis County Park Pond near Toledo the next day, while Battleground Lake got 813 cutts and - hold on to your poles - 30 rainbows weighing 10 pounds apiece.

Eastern Washington:

The **steelhead** run and catch in the Snake River is picking up steam. Glen Mendel, WDFW district fish biologist, said numbers of fish available and water conditions are usually very good in October, so catches should increase. "River flows are low and clear and water temperatures aren't bad," he said.

River and stream fishing for **trout** and other species throughout the region also is good, with fish feeding on fall insect hatches. Many of those waterways, or portions of them, close to fishing at the end of October. Fishing lakes that didn't close last month will close Oct. 31 also. One notable exception is Amber Lake in southwest Spokane County, where catch-and-release rainbow and cutthroat trout fishing, under selective gear rules, continues through November. Anglers should check the fishing pamphlet for more information on those and other fisheries.

WDFW enforcement officers recently conducted boat patrols on Lake Roosevelt and found lots of fishers with lower-than-usual catches of rainbow trout for this time of year.

North Central Washington:

Bob Jateff, WDFW district fish biologist, reminds anglers that Pearrygin Lake in the Winthrop area of Okanogan County, which normally closes Sept. 30, will remain open to fishing through Oct. 8. There are no daily catch or size limits, allowing anglers to take as many **rainbow trout** as possible before the lake is treated with rotenone to remove undesirable fish populations. The lake will close to fishing Oct. 9 when the rehabilitation treatment begins.

Jateff said some other trout fishing lakes to try in the Okanogan during October are Blue Lake in the Sinlahekin Valley, Ell Lake in the Aeneas Valley, Big Twin Lake near Winthrop, and Rat Lake near Brewster. "These are all under selective gear rules and should provide good fishing opportunities for both lure and fly anglers," he said. All are open through the month of October.

The Methow River has been closed to fishing for all species, including **steelhead**, since Oct. 1. Joe Miller, WDFW northcentral regional fish program manager, said staff are evaluating the possibility of conducting a steelhead fishery in the upper Columbia River and tributaries within the parameters of the federal Endangered Species Act. No decisions have yet been reached about that fishery.

South Central Washington:

The latest weekly creel report from WDFW Fish Biologist Paul Hoffarth indicates an estimated 731 **chinook salmon** (662 adults, 69 jacks) were harvested in the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River near the Tri-Cities. Anglers averaged one chinook for every 22 hours fished, he said, or roughly one-half chinook per boat. Total chinook harvest to date is 1,579 (1,419 adults, 160 jacks). In 2005, 3,665 chinook had been harvested through Oct 2. Angler effort has been slightly below last year's effort, he said.

Meanwhile, the fall chinook salmon harvest on the lower Yakima River east of Prosser and west of the Tri-Cities has been so high that the season's scheduled run through Oct. 22 could be curtailed. Hoffarth explained that this year's Yakima chinook run of about 2,500 fish is about one-third smaller than last year's, but the harvest of 297 fish to date is already more than three times greater than this time last year. Most of the catch has been near the Chandler hydroelectric powerhouse discharge area, which is about eight miles east of Prosser, just north of Interstate 82 off the Chandler Canal. Yakima River water is diverted from Prosser Dam to the Chandler facility. "The fish are so vulnerable there that we may be reaching an overharvest of fall chinook in the Yakima River," Hoffarth said. "We also have a high incidence of snagging in that area, and unless fish are hooked inside the mouth or on the head, they're illegal to possess." Snagging citations bring a \$540 fine. Stay tuned for a possible emergency rule change about the length of this season.

Reader Email

Everybody must be fishing instead of writing to us. Got a question, story to tell or information to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com
Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com
Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links

Salmon fishing video on KATU:
<http://www.katu.com/home/video/4348896.html?video=pop&t=a>

Video of salmon "attacks, regular speed and slow-mo (Commercial site) -
<http://www.sheltonproducts.com/Classicsalmonattack.mov>

Weekly Quote – "It is sufficient to know that the art of angling "requires as much enthusiasm as poetry, as much patience as mathematics, and as much caution as housebreaking."" - Genio Scott

GOOD LUCK!