

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 29th – July 5th, 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Report Snaggers and Poachers:

Oregon: 1 800 452-7888

Washington: 1 800 477-6224

Willamette Valley/Metro- The summer chinook fishery is beginning to peak at Bonneville with consistent counts of over a thousand fish per day crossing. Anchor anglers are taking a few on copper-red tipped spinners. Bank plunkers are taking some salmon at Warrendale.

The oversize sturgeon fishery is showing signs of slowing with fish more present in deeper holes. Keeper fishing is tapering as well.

Several Spring Chinook were taken over the weekend in the Portland Harbor by trollers dragging spinners- chartreuse green dot spinners are producing the most strikes. Sturgeon fishing has been slow with mostly shakers to show for angler's efforts. Shad are still being caught at Oregon City, but this may be the last productive weekend for them.

Early mornings and late evenings are producing a few summer steelhead in low water on the Sandy and Clackamas Rivers. Most folks are writing off the spring chinook run.

Some steelheaders are finding biters on the McKenzie below Leaburg Dam.

Few fish are venturing above Mill City on the North Santiam due to cold water above that point. Steelheading in the lower river is slow to fair. Summer steelhead and spring Chinook are entering the Foster Dam facility on the South Santiam with regularity.

Trillium Lake, Blue River above the Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, Fall Creek, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above and below Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salmon Creek and Santiam River above Detroit Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

Northwest – Estuary sturgeon fishing continues to be productive but effort and success have shifted to upstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Tongue Point to Buoy 50 is the most productive stretch in the softer tides but the weekend minus tide series will force anglers to fish in shallower water. Fishery managers will met Thursday to determine the fate of the estuary fishery and determined it would remain open as scheduled through July 4th.

With good numbers of steelhead passing Bonneville Dam, steelheaders will want to consider taking advantage of the strong morning tides to work spin-n-glos close to the beaches in Rainier and Sauvie's Island. Hot colors like reds and oranges work best. Scented lures are a strong advantage.

Ocean salmon fishers took fair numbers of coho at the 40-fathom line out of Garibaldi. Fishing bait will produce best near the surface in the morning. Later in the day, fish will move deeper and bite less aggressively.

Good clam tides will come over the weekend. Clatsop Beaches will produce the best and will close beginning July 15th. Bay crabbing on most estuaries remains poor.

Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808) reports the Nestucca is getting really low and clear now but there are some steelhead on the lower river and they are "really shifty."

Warm water offshore has tuna hopefuls gearing up and heading out. Albacore were as close as 25 miles out of Depoe Bay over the weekend. Tuna were also taken out of Newport just south of the traditional halibut grounds.

Coho fishing has been spotty out of Newport and Depoe Bay. Most boats are getting only one or two. Coho are 30 to 50 feet deep over 150 to 300 feet of water. Herring are still available to jiggers at Yaquina Bay.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411) reports slow fishing for halibut last Thursday but that he limited his boat Saturday on a salmon trip out of Depoe Bay.

Southwest – Boaters launching out of Reedsport are seeing ocean coho and crab catches improve daily. The salmon are running a little fewer than 50% fin-clipped keepers.

The weekend offered fair to good prospects for coho and bottom fish for offshore anglers out of Coos Bay. Tuna were caught about 30 miles offshore. Halibut and crab combo trips were rewarding over the last all-depth opener June 21st through 23rd.

The Rogue will close for Spring Chinook angling July 1st through October 31 2007 from River Gold Ray dam to Elk Boat Ramp. Only fin-slipped chinook may be kept elsewhere on the Rogue.

Bottom fishing out of southwest Oregon ports has been as good as it gets with rockfish large and plentiful. Lingcod are in the mix with some over 30 inches and up to 30 pounds.

Dave Pitts, Field Editor, Salmon Trout and Steelhead, adds that as long as the weather stays clear and the seas are some what calm it is AWESOME RED HOT FISHING on bottom fish.

Surf fishing off of beaches and jetties continues to produce limits of striped and barred perch.

Anglers out of Brookings are catching coho averaging six to eight pounds but with baitfish thick this year, these fish will put on weight rapidly. Crabbing is picking up inside the harbor with nets scoring keepers off the local fishing pier.

Waters scheduled for trout stocking this week include Clearwater #2, Hemlock Lake, Lake in the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir, Cole Rivers and Section 5 of the Rogue River.

SW Washington – Action on most area rivers is slow for salmon and steelhead but the East Fork of the Lewis still holds promise for bank anglers.

The mouths of the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers will become more consistent for salmon and steelhead using small spinners. Morning tides will produce the best results.

Eastern – The Owyhee River is producing Brown Trout for fly fishers using nymphs.

Trout fishing is improving at Crane Prairie as the water warms. Fly anglers are catching good-sized bass as well as husky trout at Davis Lake.

Ana Reservoir, Badger Lake, Campbell Lake, Century Gravel Pit, Big Cultus Lake, Deadhorse Lake,

Deschutes River, East Lake, Fall River, Horseshoe Lake, Lake of the Woods, Lost Lake, Olallie Lake, Shevlin Pond, Sprague Gravel Pit, Spring Creek, Thompson Valley, Three Creeks Lakes, North and South Twin Lake, and Walton Lake are scheduled to be stocked.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Sturgeon fishing in the lower Columbia continues to be the highlight of the region. Fishery managers will meet via phone conference on Thursday to determine the fate of this popular fishery- it will go through this weekend, closing on July 5th as scheduled. Any additional time would compromise the quota for the 2008 season but the shortfall of 200 fish from last years catch may allow anglers to fish through the weekend. As for fishing itself, it remains quite good but effort has shifted from the Hammond Boat Basin upstream to Tongue Point. In the early part of this week, soft tides allowed anglers to take advantage of deep water sturgeon without the use of much lead. Fishing was great from Tongue Point upstream to Buoy 50 but gradually slowed by Wednesday. Anchovies have recently been producing the best results in both deep and shallow water. A few fish are being taken from the shallow water to the north of Tongue Point but upcoming low tides will cause some hazards to navigation. Anglers fishing out of Hammond will have some opportunity for catching as fish are present but the bulk of the estuary population has clearly moved upstream. If you plan on fishing this weekend, pay particular attention to The Guide's Forecast for this region in the following section.

Upstream, gorge action for oversized fish has definitely slowed and keeper action is nearly non-existent. Fresh shad are becoming harder to come by as can be witnessed by recent dam counts. This fishery will become more challenging for those not versed in less than ideal conditions. Recent windy conditions have also hampered success.

Salmon fishing is coming into full swing in the Columbia River Gorge. Anchor anglers stand the best chance at getting into fish using spinners on the bottom in 12 to 20 feet of water. Dam counts have stabilized at nearly 1,000 fish per day with a cumulative count at nearly 27,000 adults by June 27th. If predictions are correct, this should be at the halfway mark for the entire run. Chinook fishing will close in the Columbia above Bonneville at the end of day on Monday, July 2nd.

Steelhead counts are on the increase as well. Numbers have finally climbed to over 300 adults per day triggering more consistent opportunities in the current minus tide series.

The Guide's Forecast – This is likely to be the last week for sturgeon catch and keep fishing in the estuary. Although it's possible that the minus tides will take good numbers of sturgeon downstream of the bridge, the Tongue Point area is likely to continue to produce the best action. Crowds should be swarming to take advantage of the last keeper opportunities of the season. Anchovies will make the best bait but for anglers that favor shallower water, sand shrimp will be another top producer. The trash fish are not so prevalent above the bridge but can still be a problem in the deeper water. The bulk of the fish are clearly present in the Tongue Point area but anglers can still expect to take fish near the Astoria/Megler Bridge and upstream to Miller Island.

For anglers fishing in the gorge, oversized sturgeon will be high on the list but salmon anglers will likely be the motivated presence as the fishery nears its peak season. Anchor anglers working along Ives Island at the Shad Rack, the Oak Tree Hole and downstream gravel bars will produce the best results. Use solid colors like red/white or green white at first light but switch to the metallic colors when the sun hits the water. Copper/red tipped spinners should be a top choice in this section. Bank anglers in the Warrendale area are taking a few fish using spin-n-glos and tuna balls.

Bank anglers fishing in the Portland to Westport stretch of the lower Columbia will want to take advantage of the great minus tide series this weekend for steelhead. These strong minus tides coupled with good numbers of fish passing Bonneville Dam should drastically improve beach fishing. Top bets

will be the eastern tip of Tenasillahe Island and several other gentle sloping beaches along the lower Columbia River Islands. Also, Jones Beach near Westport is a strong option as well as Sauvie's Island Beaches. Be sure to use heavy leader or even wire rigged spin-n-glos as it seems a less mobile spin-n-glo draws more strikes. Both salmon and steelhead should be available but hot colored lures are more likely to take steelhead while greens and purples are more likely to take salmon.

Folks interested in good opportunities for razor clam digging should look at this minus tide series along Clatsop area beaches. The tide series is currently underway and should improve as we move into the weekend. Don't hesitate to go early in the tide as some commercial diggers indicate that the clam set was quite high on the beach making the early part of the tide some of the most productive for digging.

Ocean salmon season opens this weekend for the North of Falcon area. If catches out of the southerly ports are any indication, it could be an exciting early season for the mouth of the Columbia. Most anglers will head right for the CR Buoy about 14 miles from Buoy 10. This is a logical start and the weekend ocean forecast looks quite friendly if it actually holds. Fresh herring is an obvious first choice but anchovies are another top bait. More motivated anglers may wish to look south to "The Cove" near Seaside for larger chinook that often cruise the shoreline this time of year. Ocean caught chinook have been a rare commodity this year however.

Crabbing is rumored to have picked up in the lower Columbia but ocean crabbing should remain the best option for those motivated enough to go get them. Shad will be a top bait as fresh rockfish carcasses are a bit hard to come by locally in Astoria.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – With counts of spring Chinook only 20,660 as of July 24th, it seems unlikely the total for 2007 will approach half the projected 52,000. Summer steelhead counts are nearing 10,000 which is about 4,000 fewer than last year on the same date but a little greater than 2005. Sturgeon fishing has been slow with mostly shakers to show for angler's efforts. Steelhead are also being caught on occasion on the lower Willamette. One Oregon City bank anglers was surprised to hook one while he was soaking a worm on the bottom.

While numbers of spring Chinook and summers steelhead are increasing daily in the North Santiam, the cold snowmelt draining into the upper river from Detroit reservoir has slowed the bite. It follows, then that the better chance of a hookup is in the lower river.

The Guide's Forecast – While there was a flurry of activity for Chinook over last weekend, with the water temperature holding at 70 degrees, it'll be a challenge getting late springers to respond. The best chance of doing so, however, will be by trolling spinners in lower Portland Harbor. Expect sturgeon efforts to yield mostly undersized fish for a while. Shad are still being caught at Oregon City, but this may be the last productive weekend for them. A few shad are also being taken at Coon Island but this area will wind down prior to Oregon City.

Salmonids are moving rapidly through the Santiam from the point at which it joins the Willamette up to Jefferson. The best stretch of the North Santiam is above Stayton to Mehama. Try drifting sand shrimp which has been found effective over the past week. Fishing has been slow in the Santiams but is improving.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The Clackamas is awash with swimmers and rafters every day from mid-morning onward, so get an early start for a chance at a summer steelhead. Fishing has been spotty at best.

With the water in the Sandy very clear now, it's a typical summer pattern for the few summer steelhead in the system. Fishing is slow but first and last light offer the best chance for a hookup. Keep baits and lures small and leaders long and light.

North Coast Fishing Report – With poor spring chinook returns a reality in Tillamook, anglers are anxious to get on with productive salmon fishing. It looks like the offshore season is off to a good start with good catches of coho reported from Garibaldi. Boaters headed out to the 40-fathom line found good opportunity in recent days. Furthermore, anglers have been greeted with good conditions lately making it all the more fun to venture out. Trolled herring near the surface in the early morning, gradually going deeper as the day progresses is the general rule to follow.

Anglers are getting more excited about the tuna that are now showing offshore. Most of the reports are coming from the mid-coast ports but action is sure to swing north in the coming weeks.

Inland, some motivated bank anglers are taking a few steelhead in the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. Stealthy tactics are a must. **Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports, "The Nestucca is getting really low and clear now. There are some steelhead on the lower river and they are really shifty. The best approach is to walk to the spot before floating through. There are some chinooks around, but they are getting some color. There are also some being caught in the tide areas with mixed results. Seems on the cloudy days you will do better, and on the sunny days, the bite is poor.

For the river, be really stealthy, and you can have a pretty good day. Small baits for drift gear, dark spinners, and jigs will all produce in mild colors.

OSP is still on track for nailing the flossers on Three rivers. Give us a hand if you are around, and give us a plate number and some description of the guys, and we'll do our best to get these guys off our river. They just ruin it for the good guys.

Off shore, we are hearing of a bunch of coho and kings both near the 150 foot range. Also, the bottom fishing has been fantastic, with easy limits coming as the surf allows... Have a great week!"

The Guide's Forecast – Offshore coho fishing will be the best bet for anglers headed out of Garibaldi. Boaters must be aware that the minus tides may make for hazardous bar crossings in the morning so check conditions before heading out. A new sign has been posted at the Garibaldi Boat Basin. Target the 200 to 250-foot depth ranges. The ocean is forecasted to be friendly.

Bank anglers fishing pocket water in the upper reaches of the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers may have some better luck with steelhead this weekend. Cloud cover may benefit anglers as fish are likely to be extremely spooky with the weather we have recently been having.

Central & South Coast Reports – Boaters launching for offshore salmon take note: No more than 2 single point, single shank barbless hooks allowed by anglers fishing for salmon *and on boats with any salmon on board*. This means barbless hooks for bottom fish if the boat has landed any salmon. Authorities have indicated intent to enforce this rule in 2007.

The coho opener last Saturday was marginally productive for anglers anxious to take home fresh silver for the barbeque. The ODFW had checkers stationed at all points of launch and they reported about a 30% success rate. Newport and Depoe Bay boaters fared best with nearly half the anglers trying finding success while those heading to the ocean out of normally-productive Winchester Bay did poorly.

It's early in the coho season, however, with July prime time for the run. With almost 600,000 hatchery

fish forecast to return to Oregon rivers, it's shaping up to be a very good run this year. Chinook will remain in the mix, particularly for anglers trolling deeper in order to target them, but there are far fewer of them around than coho.

Offshore salmon catches picked up following the lackluster weekend results, however.

While offshore coho fishing has been good to some, disappointing for others, few would argue that fresh, bright bait is most effective. Now is the time to get it at Yaquina Bay. Herring were a no-show in February and March, the months they normally show, but have entered the bay recently by the tens of thousands. Some anglers are taking hundreds in just a few hours of jigging. Take the kids and stock up.

Boaters launching out of Newport found improved offshore action on June 27th as they took good numbers of coho over just 100 feet of water.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411) adds this, "Last Thursday did some halibut fishing out of Newport at the southeast corner of the Rockpile. Fishing was real slow. One small halibut was it.

"Saturday - had a salmon trip out of Depoe Bay. Limited the customers on coho by noon. The fish were scattered and only averaged about five or six pounds. The best setup for us a diver, mid size silver dodger and a green and white hoochie with a piece of herring and some Pro Cure shrimp gel. We ran this setup twelve pulls directly behind the motor.

"Tuesday - Smallmouth bass trip on the Umpqua. Two guys landed about sixty bass. Most of them in the twelve to fifteen inch range. We had one bass about four pounds come off right at the boat. The hot setup was a Bleeding hook stump thumper with a three inch salt and pepper rubber worm with some Pro Cure Garlic crawfish gel."

Kremers added that Monday he played golf - "still suck."

Mainstem and South Umpqua smallmouth bass anglers are catching fine numbers of fish now. With the mainstem closed to steelheading, the North Umpqua was a little more productive over the past week for springers and summer steelhead. Shad fishing is holding up around Sawyer's Rapids and Yellow Creek. Anglers launching out of Winchester Bay did a little better for coho mid-week, finding them over 125 feet of water. Tuna are being caught just outside the 125 line.

Tuna were taken within 30 miles of port out of Coos Bay over the past weekend and again Wednesday this week. The Coos River is kicking out good numbers of shad.

Anglers on the lower Rogue are experiencing results similar to those earlier in the season - poor. The water in Rogue Bay is in the mid-60-degree range, too warm for Chinook to hold. The coho run has yet to get off the mark here but predictions are for a decent run. A few summer steelhead are being taken on the middle river while fishing is sporadic on the upper Rogue. Only fin-clipped Chinook may be kept now and as of Saturday, June 30, the stretch from Gold Ray Dam to Rogue Elk Boat Ramp is closed entirely to Chinook fishing to protect wild springers.

Tuna are being caught the south coast, but they have been farther offshore. On Wednesday this week, it required a 40 mile trip out of Gold Beach to reach blue water and albacore.

Anglers are having good results throwing spinners for sea-run cutthroat trout on the Chetco River.

Dave Pitts, Field Editor, Salmon Trout and Steelhead, adds this, "As long as the weather stays clear and the sea's are some what calm it is AWESOME RED HOT FISHING on bottom fish. One buddy said walls of fish (Salmon) are out just about 14 miles and moving with the warmer water. When that

cold water bubble breaks , it's going to be fish city.

"Oregon Update - The Lull before the storm. The water remains cold in the salt keeping the main body Chinook well off of the coast at this time, There are a few Kings being caught but they are only a few coming in and chasing the bait that now the Harbor plays host to. The opener for Coho started off slow due to clod water swinging in holding the 51 plus degree water needed to put the bite on is now 8 miles out. Anglers wanting to connect should look at trolling slightly faster for them than their larger cousins the kings. I myself like the 2.8 to 3.0 mph for Coho and use reds and gold's for solid hook ups.

"Coho are just out front at this time but they to are scattered due to colder water temps. Target areas between the buoys and a shallow water column. If fishing with two rods or more target the 30 foot, 25 foot and one on a dive to cover the 15 foot to the surface mark, hold on!

"Rotary salmon killers and Roto Chip baits are usually the easiest and worry free way to get that perfect roll on your baits. On Rotary's I would stay with reds, blues and clear holders.

"These fish do school and have had more times than not as I am clipping the main line to the downrigger clip have my arm yanked back due to a coho taking it off of the surface.

"Remember ONLY FIN CLIPPED coho may be retained, coho have a white gum line kings are called black mouths due to their black gum line.

"Another way to rig for coho for those who do not have down riggers, use an inline banana weight and not heavy. I would fish at most 2 ounces pulling an anchovy bait on a rotary or threaded on a 54 inch leader.

"Note: When you make turns to head in another direction watch your inside rod, the speed will drop out on this line , kings and coho are known to pick these baits up?

"The South Coast of Oregon is simply HOT! No B.S. no fish tails it is smoken. This week saw a ton of old growth backs and Blues averaging well into the 4 plus pound range. Anglers are dropping everything from Gitzits to tubed baits , scampi tails, twin tails and the list goes on. White was a hot color this week with dark greens and browns.

"State Line was the hottest place on the South Coast this week, Holy Cow some dinosaurs were boated. Lings in the 34 inch range including one over 30 lbs, quill backs over 5 lbs and several blacks over 6 lbs.

"Most of the Blacks were right on the surface in the early am, Dave Whintz said every cast was a hook up, every cast!. Many boats were catching and releasing dozens of big fish to fill limits and extend their fishing morning. Lead Fish and one ounce jig heads with a white 4 inch scampi tail "

Central and Eastern Oregon – Paulina is fishing well for trollers as well as jig anglers who are scoring decent numbers of foot-long kokanee.

The occasional summer steelhead has been taken at Shearer's Falls on the Deschutes. This fishery will only improve as better numbers of steelhead move upriver.

Northwest Trout – Trillium Lake, Blue River above the Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, Fall Creek, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salmon Creek and Santiam River above Detroit Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout in the Willamette Zone this week. The McKenzie River below Leaburg Lake will receive approximately 3,300 legal size and more than 1,500 larger (12-inch) rainbow trout.

Northwest Bass & Panfish - Bass are recovering for their post-spawn doldrums and settling into simmer patterns. Until the Fall feeding binge starts, hot action will occur early and late in the day. Look for improved top water action during these times of day. Cloudy days will extend the effective periods.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 27 - July 10, 2007

North Puget Sound

Fishing has been slow for anglers on the saltwater, but catch numbers could rise as more marine areas open for salmon in July. Meanwhile, anglers casting for hatchery spring chinook at a couple of the region's rivers continue to do well.

Salmon anglers on the Skagit and Cascade rivers have had good success this year, said Brett Barkdull, a WDFW fish biologist. "Both boat and bank anglers are doing great on each river," he said. "The fishery continues to roar along at a pretty good pace, but time is running out for anglers."

Springer fisheries on both the Skagit and the Cascade run through July 8. Until then, the Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River, while the Cascade is open from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road bridge. The daily limit on both rivers is two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length.

Barkdull reminds anglers that **bull trout** and **Dolly Varden** retention is prohibited on the Cascade and Sauk rivers, and on the Skagit River from Rockport to the Gorge Dam.

Beginning July 1, anglers on the Skagit and Baker rivers will have a chance to catch **sockeye**. Barkdull said the opener appears to be shaping up nicely, as sockeye have already started to show up. "It looks like fishing could be good right off the bat," he said.

On the Skagit, the sockeye fishery is open from the Dalles Bridge to 200 feet above the east bank of the Baker River. On the Baker, anglers can fish from the mouth of the river to the Highway 20 bridge. The daily limit on each river is two sockeye at least 12 inches in length. Anglers should note two 1½-day closures on each river in early July. For details on the fishery, check WDFW's 2007/2008 Fishing in Washington pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Saltwater anglers are gearing up for mark-selective chinook fisheries in marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). But those fisheries don't start until July 16. Until then, anglers will find a number of other fishing opportunities out on the Sound.

The catch-and-release salmon fishery in the northern portion of Marine Area 10 continues through June 30. However, beginning July 1, anglers fishing in the marine area will have a daily limit of two salmon, with no minimum size limit. Anglers must release chinook salmon, and handling rules are in effect.

Another option is Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), which also opens July 1 for salmon. "Early on, I expect fish to be scattered throughout the islands," said Steve Thiesfeld, another WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers will have to work at it, but there should be fish out there." Anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon, and can only keep one chinook, which must be 22 inches in length to retain.

Break out those **crab** pots. The crab fishery opens July 4 in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9, 10, and the southern portion of 7.

Fisheries in those areas will be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

Elsewhere, **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fisheries are in full swing in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9 and the northern and central portion of Marine Area 7. For more information on the shrimp fisheries check WDFW's website at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpindex.shtml>.

Before heading out, anglers should check the rules and regulations for freshwater and saltwater fisheries in WDFW's 2007/2008 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

The summer salmon fishery kicks into high gear in early July with openings along the coast, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal. In addition, most areas of central Puget Sound are set to open for crabbing by July Fourth, and anglers can expect at least one more day of halibut fishing - scheduled June 28 - off the north coast.

"Overall, we're anticipating a better ocean salmon fishery than last year," said Doug Milward, WDFW ocean salmon manager. "We're already getting reports of some good-sized coho all along the coast."

Salmon fisheries opening July 1 include:

- Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) - Open daily with a two-fish daily limit. Only one chinook may be retained and all wild coho must be released. Minimum size for chinook is 24 inches and 16 inches for coho.
- Marine Area 2 (Westport) - Open Sundays through Thursdays only with a two-fish daily limit. Only one chinook may be retained and all wild coho must be released. Minimum size for chinook is 24 inches and 16 inches for coho.
- Marine Areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu/Pillar Point and eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) - Open daily with a two-fish daily limit, plus two additional pink. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches. No minimum size for other salmon. Release all wild chinook, coho and chum. Single-point barbless hooks are required.
- Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal south of Aycock Point) - Open daily with a four-fish daily limit. Up to two chinook may be retained. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches. All chum must be released.

Salmon fisheries opening July 3 include:

- Marine Area 3 (LaPush) - Open Tuesdays through Saturdays only with a two-fish daily limit. Only one chinook may be retained and all wild coho must be released. Minimum size for chinook is 24 inches and 16 inches for coho. Anglers can add a pink from Aug. 1 - Sept. 15.
- Marine Area 4 (Neah Bay) - Open Tuesdays through Saturdays only with a two-fish daily limit. Only one chinook may be retained and all wild coho must be released. Minimum size for chinook is 24 inches and 16 inches for coho.

Anglers are advised to check the 2007-08 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for additional regulations.

Meanwhile, salmon anglers have been doing well in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island/Tacoma), where a WDFW creel check reported about one fish for every three rods over the June 23 weekend. The fishery

runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum for other species. Commencement Bay is closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 1. Selective fishing rules are in effect this year, requiring anglers to use single, barbless hooks and release any **wild chinook**.

Still hoping to tie into a big flatfish? Recreational **halibut** fishers will get at least one more day of fishing off the north coast this month. On June 28, fishing will be open on all waters in marine areas 3 (La Push) and 4 (Neah Bay). There are 28,700 pounds remaining in the quota, allowing the fishery to reopen, said Carol Henry, WDFW fish biologist. "The weather's been great, so we hope anglers will come out and try for a fish." If enough quota remains, another day may be scheduled, Henry said.

Around the corner in Marine Area 5, halibut fishing remains steady. A WDFW creel check near Olson's Resort off Sekiu showed one halibut for every three rods. Anglers can fish this area five days a week until Aug. 3. The daily limit for halibut is one fish.

Recreational **Dungeness crab** fishing opens today (June 27) in Marine Area 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) and four more areas open July Fourth, including marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). Crabbing in all five of those areas will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only through Sept. 3.

Crabbing is already under way in several other areas from the coast to south Puget Sound. Marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) opened June 18 and will be open through Jan. 2, 2008, seven days a week. So far, preliminary results are mixed, said Dave Lowry, WDFW shellfish biologist. "Down in Nisqually they're fishing pretty well and getting some good size crabs, but rough water on the coast is making it hard to get a good catch. Overall though, we expect a good season."

Lowry reminds crab fishers that only male Dungeness crabs with shells measuring at least 6¼ inches can be taken. All undersized crab, female Dungeness crab and all softshell crab of either sex must be returned to the water.

He also advises crab fishers to be aware of several changes in this year's catch-reporting system, designed to improve catch estimates and make the reporting process more convenient for sport crabbers:

- Two-card reporting system: All sport crabbers fishing in Puget Sound will be required to report their Dungeness crab catch on separate summer and fall/winter catch record cards during the course of the season.
- On-line reporting: For the first time, sport crabbers will have the option of reporting their catch via the Internet in lieu of mailing in their catch cards. The website address will be printed on the catch cards along with the reporting deadlines.
- No coastal reporting: Catch record cards are no longer required to fish for Dungeness crab on the Washington coast (marine areas 1-4).

"We're encouraging people to use the new online reporting system that will be available this year right after Labor Day," Lowry said. "We really rely on the data we get, and we hope this system will make it much easier for fishers to report their catch."

The new catch record cards are available from license dealers throughout the state. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>, or <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex.shtml>.

Southwest Washington:

The good news is that hatchery **steelhead** are moving into the lower Columbia River in increasing numbers, and **ocean salmon** fishing opens July 1 off the southern coast. The bad news is that catch-and-keep fishing for adult **summer chinook** salmon comes to an end June 30 below Bonneville Dam and the **sturgeon** fishery in the Columbia River estuary is fast approaching the area quota.

"Area fishing opportunities are once again in flux," said Steve Vigg, a WDFW fish harvest manager in Vancouver. "There's plenty of good fishing on the horizon, but it may be in a different spot with different gear."

As of June 24, anglers fishing below Priest Rapids Dam had caught 1,350 adult **summer chinook** salmon, fast approaching the area quota of 1,650 fish, said Robin Ehlke, another WDFW fish biologist. "We definitely expect to reach the quota by the end of the day June 30," she said.

Boat and bank anglers averaged one adult chinook for every 13.8 or 15.3 rods, respectively, that week, with the best boat fishing reported in the gorge. Bank anglers did well at Kalama, Vancouver and just below Bonneville Dam. Hatchery **steelhead** catches were best from Longview downstream.

Worth noting is that catch rates for summer chinook and summer steelhead have been running neck-and-neck on the lower Columbia River in recent days. And, while the chinook fishery is coming to a close, "the summer steelhead run really gets going in July," Ehlke said. Although summer steelhead counts at Bonneville Dam were lower than expected through June 24, WDFW is still projecting a run of 297,900 fish - just shy of last year's run of 319,000 fish, she said.

"Counts of hatchery steelhead are clearly picking up," Ehlke said. "We should start seeing catch rates ramping up soon in the Columbia River, as well as major tributaries such as the Cowlitz, Lewis, Kalama, and Washougal rivers. In addition, the mainstem Columbia below Bonneville Dam will remain open for hatchery steelhead and chinook jacks."

Ehlke noted that only steelhead with a clipped adipose or ventral fin and a healed scar at the location of the clipped fin may be retained. Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for area-specific regulations.

As with adult summer chinook, the retention season for **white sturgeon** in the lower Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines downstream is about to end. This year's sport catch is nearing the 16,200-fish quota for that area, and resource managers from Washington and Oregon will meet June 28 to decide whether to close the fishery before the scheduled ending date of July 5, Ehlke said. "If the catch exceeds the quota, it comes out of next year's allocation," she said. "It's a judgment call." Anglers can check that decision by calling the WDFW Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500) or the Fishing Rule Change site on the department's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/>).

Another option for sturgeon anglers is to move upriver. Sturgeon retention remains open in the Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines upriver to Marker #85 below Bonneville Dam and from Bonneville Dam upriver to The Dalles Dam. The first area is open to sturgeon retention Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only. Bonneville Pool is open seven days per week. All other areas upstream to McNary Dam are closed to sturgeon retention, although catch-and-release is allowed in the open areas.

Then again, anglers may want to head offshore for the start of the 2007 **ocean salmon** season. Marine areas 1 (Ilwaco) and 2 (Westport) open for salmon fishing July 1, with coastal areas farther north opening July 3. Waters off Ilwaco are open seven days a week, while salmon fishing off Westport

is limited to Thursdays through Sundays. Anglers are advised to check the Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for additional regulations.

Eastern Washington:

Chris Donley, WDFW district fish biologist in Spokane, said **trout** can be easy to catch this time of year because most fish are located at creek mouths in cold, deep water. "Anglers should fish early morning or late in the evening at any of the usual places," he said. Those places include Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County; Amber, Badger, Clear, Fish, Medical, West Medical and Williams lakes in southwest Spokane County; and Rock Lake in Whitman County. "Use a fish finder to locate the concentrations of trout and then try smaller baits dropped vertically into the school," he said. "I like to use single salmon eggs, or worms and salmon eggs combined. Slow presentations are best."

WDFW Enforcement Officer Curt Wood also reports good trout fishing. While checking fishers recently at West Medical Lake, Wood said there were "some pretty good numbers of **rainbow trout** taken, most in the 14- to 17-inch range, mostly by boaters."

Other fisheries also have been good lately, Donley said. Downs Lake, east of Sprague in the southwest corner of Spokane County, has been yielding **yellow perch** and **largemouth bass**. Coffeepot Lake, northeast of Odessa in Lincoln County, also is good for perch and bass. Anglers are reminded that the use of bait is prohibited at Coffeepot Lake. The Twin Lakes, especially Upper Twin, and Deer Springs Lake in Lincoln County are producing largemouth bass.

"All the other bass waters in the region should be rolling along well right now," Donley said. "But as things heat up, go fishing in the early and late hours."

Large black crappie can be found in the deep areas of Lake Spokane or Long Lake, the Spokane River reservoir northwest of town. "You have to look hard for them," Donley said. "But they're there and they are big."

Sprague Lake also has been producing an occasional large crappie and some large **channel catfish**.

June 30 is the last day to try to catch a Snake River **hatchery spring chinook salmon**. The portion of the river from Texas Rapids boat launch upstream to the Corps of Engineers boat launch (about a mile upstream of Little Goose Dam on the south bank), has been open since early May. Daily catch limit is one hatchery (adipose-fin-clipped) chinook of at least 12 inches in length. Anglers must use barbless hooks no larger than 5/8 inch (point of hook to shank).

John Whalen, WDFW regional fish program manager, said the special Snake River chinook season has been going well for anglers and the last days of the season could continue to be productive.

All fishers using WDFW water access sites are reminded that open fires outside of designated areas and all fireworks are prohibited.

North Central Washington:

Summer **chinook salmon** fishing in the Columbia River above Wells Dam opens July 1. The river is open from the Highway 173 Bridge at Brewster to the Highway 17 Bridge at Bridgeport. A portion of the Okanogan River, from the mouth to the Highway 97 Bridge immediately upstream of mouth, also opens July 1. The daily catch limit is six salmon of at least 12 inches in length, only two of which can be adults (at least 24 inches). All sockeye and coho must be released.

Okanogan River anglers may see live-fish-trapping gear or catch a tagged fish. Both are part of a chinook salmon study, conducted by WDFW and the Colville Confederated Tribes. The fish-trapping gear is marked with bright orange signs, and some previously captured salmon were equipped with jaw tags before being released. If anglers harvest a jaw-tagged salmon, the tag should be returned, with the date and location of catch to WDFW or the tribes, or by calling 360-902-2240 or 509-634-2113. Anglers who call or send in information on tagged fish will be entered into a raffle for cash prizes.

"Catch-and-release **trout** fishing in the Methow should start to pick up during July as the river drops into shape," said Bob Jateff, WDFW district fish biologist in Omak. "But remember it's under selective gear rules and be sure to check the regulation pamphlet closely as some areas of the Methow and tributaries are closed to all fishing. Signs will be posted at all our access sites informing anglers of both the open and closed areas."

Lakes under selective gear rules in the Okanogan also continue to provide good trout fishing. Rat Lake near Brewster, Davis Lake near Winthrop, and Blue Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area are three that are holding up well despite warmer temperatures.

WDFW Sinlahekin Wildlife Area Manager Dale Swedberg said Blue Lake is "a blue ribbon selective fishery," where rainbow and brown trout can weigh up to three pounds and reach up to 20 inches in length. "There's also good **brook trout** fishing in Forde Lake, if you can find an open spot in the emergent vegetation," he said. "Conner Lake is a good place to try to catch either rainbow or brook trout. If you don't mind a good hike through rattlesnake country, Dohney Lake may produce large brook trout."

Jateff said **rainbow trout** fishing is still steady at Conconully Lake and Reservoir, Wannacut, Pearrygin, and Spectacle lakes.

"And for those who would like to catch a few **bluegill** and **crappie**, Leader Lake has been good for bluegill measuring up to eight inches and crappie up to nine inches," Jateff said. Leader Lake, which is four miles west of the town of Okanogan, has a concrete boat launch and numerous campsites, he added.

Walleye fishing in Banks Lake is in full swing, said Matt Polacek, WDFW fish biologist. "Fish have been caught in 16 to 22 feet of water along weed beds and over flats," Polacek said. "Fishing seems to be best in the evening hours. Troll bottom walkers with a perch pattern worm harness baited with a night crawler. Fish over the flats around Steamboat Rock and in the Devil's Punchbowl over the old roadbed. Also try north of Steamboat Rock in the large bays."

In the Columbia Basin, Potholes Reservoir water levels are dropping and surface water temperatures are climbing, signaling the beginning of "top water" **largemouth bass** fishing. Cast shallow diving plugs or spinner baits to catch bass and occasionally **walleye** in the sand dunes, Lind Coulee or O'Sullivan dam areas of the reservoir. Good **smallmouth bass** action and a few big rainbow trout has been reported in many areas outside of the sand dunes.

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[South Central Washington:](#)

Rainbow, cutthroat and **brown trout** fly-fishing on the Yakima River has been good. Fly fishers report the best dry-fly action during daylight hours in the Upper Canyon.

Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist, said many other rivers and streams throughout the region are in good shape now and are producing nice fish. "The Naches and Rattlesnake are good for both rainbow and cutthroat trout that average eight to 10 inches, but larger fish are caught, particularly in the Naches," Cummins said. "Nanuem and Taneum Creeks are also good bets. Rattlesnake Creek and part of the Naches are catch-and-release only and have other special regulations. Anglers should check all the regulations before heading out."

WDFW District Fish Biologist Eric Anderson said fishing has been good for triploid and catchable size **rainbow trout** at Clear Lake, and for **kokanee** at Rimrock Lake in Yakima County. "But anglers need to pay attention to fishing rules on the waterway that connects these two lakes, the North Fork of the Tieton River, because protected **bull trout** are in the area," he said. "If you inadvertently catch a bull trout, you must release it unharmed."

Anderson said this is the time of year that bull trout slowly start migrating to their spawning areas. "They're especially vulnerable now," he said. "Bull trout tend to be more aggressive and grow larger than other native trout, such as rainbow and cutthroat. They're commonly confused with the non-native eastern brook trout and in many areas of the Yakima basin both species are found in the same waters." Anderson said brook trout have black spots on the backside dorsal fin, but bull trout have no distinct spots on the dorsal fin. "Remember no black, put it back," he said. Rainbow and cutthroat trout have dark spots on the body, but bull trout have light cream-colored to orange-colored spots on the body. "If you don't know the difference, just be safe and let it go," Anderson said. Anderson reminds anglers that in the North Fork Tieton River, fishing is prohibited within 400 feet of Clear Lake Dam and in the spillway channel below Clear Lake.

High lakes are a good destination for hot summer days and there is good fishing for triploid rainbows at Dog and Leech Lakes in the White Pass area of Yakima County and at Lost Lake near Snoqualmie Pass in Kittitas County.

Channel catfish and **smallmouth bass** continue to be caught in several locations along the Yakima and Columbia rivers, from the Tri-Cities to Yakima.

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Reader Email

Reader Fernando C. wrote to say, Dear Michael - "I went to McIver Park like you suggested in the email and did really good. The fishing whole was crowded on Sunday and only fished it for two or three hours. I went back Monday and hooked two fish. I didn't land them and was very unfortunate because my wife is having a hard time believing I've been fishing at the river all that time."

In a follow-up Email today (06/28), Frenando wrote to say he was using a lime-colored corky with pink yard and shrimp scent. Festive.

Got a question, story to tell or information to share? Shoot us an Email!

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

More on the new World Record Rainbow Trout

http://www.trophytroutguide.com/articles/world_record_rainbow_trout_adam.htm

Information and gear for Kite Fishing:

<http://www.fishingkites.co.nz/index.htm>

Marmot Dam removal at Bull Run Hydroelectric Project will benefit fish:

http://www.portlandgeneral.com/community_and_env/hydropower_and_fish/sandy/dam_removal.asp?bhcp=1

You'd think they would've figured this out from the Ballard Locks fiasco:

<http://www.komotv.com/news/local/8156002.html>

Weekly Quote – "People who fish for food, and sport be damned, are called pot-fishermen. The more expert ones are called crack pot-fishermen. All other fishermen are called crackpot fishermen. This is confusing." - Ed Zern

GOOD LUCK!