

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **November 2<sup>nd</sup> – November 8<sup>th</sup> 2007**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Although salmon fishing remains open on the mainstem Columbia, the section from Beacon Rock to Bonneville Dam closes to fishing from a floating device. This is the most productive stretch below Bonneville this time of year but fish are beginning to turn dark, making poor tablefare.

Sturgeon fishing has slowed somewhat in the gorge but remains open 7 days per week though the end of the year. Keepers are becoming more challenging to find but both bank and boat anglers are taking them daily.

The coho run across Willamette Falls has been winding down most of October. The water is a chilly 50 degrees and sturgeon, which may be retained seven days a week, remains the best fishing option in the lower Willamette. Multnomah Channel has been providing catch-and-release action for good numbers of smaller sturgeon.

Water level and flow on the North Santiam will be variable for weeks to come. Some decent steelhead are available but fishing is spotty.

Fishing on the Clackamas has stalled. Hundreds of coho may be seen holding in holes on Eagle Creek but they are all dark fish.

There's very little pressure on the Sandy and very few fish are being caught.

The upper McKenzie has recovered from the past rain and is providing fair trout fishing to fly anglers.

Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake are scheduled to be planted with legal-sized and larger trout.

**Northwest –** Tillamook Bay continues to be the bright spot for anglers seeking chinook on the north coast. Although catches dropped in recent days, fish are well dispersed in the lower bay with the jaws, Ghost Hole and the west channel all producing a few fish. Softer tides over the weekend should stimulate better fishing in a time period when action is usually peaking.

The ocean is closed to salmon fishing outside of the Tillamook Bay Terminal area. The "bubble" will remain open until November 15<sup>th</sup> and commercial trollers will be taking advantage of a 15-day season beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>. The weekend ocean forecast does not look favorable for recreational vessels.

The Wilson tidewater that is usually producing good catches is reported as poor. Bobber fishers are usually tallying good numbers by now but many potential biters migrated upstream on the last rain freshet. Those fish are dark now.

All north coast streams are low and clear now and returning fish will anxiously await the next significant fall rain.

Crabbing is good in Netarts and Nestucca estuaries and excellent in the lower Columbia. Softer

morning tides give crabbers a strong advantage this weekend.

**Southwest** – Most streams and rivers on the south coast have dropped and are in need of rain. With no precipitation in long-range forecast, anglers will need to be resourceful.

Steelheading on the North Umpqua has been slow all season with low run numbers. It's about over now as steelhead are heading up tributaries where fishing is not allowed.

Crabbing has been slow to fair in Winchester Bay.

Coos Bay has been delivering limits of Dungeness with crabbing expected to get even better into November. Both numbers and size of crab will improve.

It appears it will be a while before rain falls so it'll be some time before the Elk and Sixes are fishable. They are currently very low and clear with no fish present.

While Chinook and coho are few and far between, steelhead fishing on the Rogue has been decent at times around Agness, The flies-only stretch of the upper Rogue is expected to deliver fair to good results this week. This is a catch and release affair as most of the steelhead will not be of hatchery origin.

Chetco chinook anglers experienced some very good fishing early last week but action diminished as the river dropped. Now low and clear, the next rains will re-invigorate this fishery. Traditionally, the Chetco provides very large Chinook at this time of year when water conditions are conducive.

**Eastern** – Nymphing has produced good catches of trout on the lower Deschutes, but steelheading was very slow over the past weekend and earlier this week. The Deschutes is now closed to trout fishing from the north end of Warm Springs to Pelton Dam.

Steelheading is improving on the Grande Ronde with some nice, bright, hatchery fish being taken.

**SW Washington** – Despite an increase in bag limits, the late run coho to the area streams continue to disappoint anglers. Chinook are still showing in the catches but very few anglers are participating in the catch and release fishing.

Anglers used to be able to rely on November steelhead on the Cowlitz but hatchery plants have been cut back and returns are poor. It will be a while before these streams produce any good numbers of retainable fish again.

The Klickitat River remains one of the better options for late run coho.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – With the current boating closure of salmon fishing from Beacon Rock to Bonneville Dam, sturgeon is now the focus for almost all Columbia River fishers. Coho remain open with boaters having the best access to them although passage at Bonneville Dam clearly indicates the numbers are waning. None-the-less, boaters above Bonneville Dam are taking fair numbers of fish with the mouth of the Klickitat one of the bright spots. There are also some areas below Bonneville (now Beacon Rock) where coho fishing can also produce fair results. Mouths of tributaries can still boot out fair numbers- especially Washington rivers that host returns of late-run fish. Although chinook are still present, they are not in good shape and should be left to spawn. The best fishing would be in what are now closed waters. The fishery does remain open to bank angling.

As far as sturgeon fishing goes, action has slowed from previous weeks as expected. Although catch rates have dropped, action is still worthy of a trip as boat anglers took home over a keeper for every other boat while bank anglers, fishing close to the deadline, took a keeper for every 5 rods. With a 7-day/week season, action is as good as to be expected but anglers are coming up with mixed results. Effort is still high, which makes innovation a key to one's success. Try different, fresh baits like squid, shrimp or octopus and if you are not finding keepers in the location you are fishing, it is best to move around until you do. It's the experienced angler taking home the consistent keepers so don't expect slam dunk results if you haven't built up the experience that pays dividends.

The flats downstream of Beacon Rock produced fair results for **pro guide Joe Salvey (503-349-1411)**. Joe has been getting into a mix of keepers, shakers and an occasional oversized fish. Smelt and shrimp make up the bulk of the bait that Joe uses and even though a downturn in the fishery is expected when water temperatures cool, the fishery should remain active for the next couple of weeks.

Steelheaders working the John Day Pool and Arm are coming into their peak season. Although consistency was not well recognized over the last 2 weeks, the action was fair for trollers and the few bank anglers participating this week. The ODF&W check indicated three adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and two unclipped steelhead released for 35 bank rods; and 22 adipose fin-clipped steelhead and one Chinook kept, plus 12 unclipped steelhead released for 80 boats. Trollers working plugs take the bulk of the fish- especially in the mainstem above the John Day Dam. Bobber and jig or bait fishers will take fish daily in the mainstem John Day through the month of November.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia has been good reports **pro guide Val Perry (503-738-6991)**. Val reported easy limits for his customers over the weekend although strong tides did keep some crabbers from achieving the same success. The standard areas near buoys 20 and 22 were slam dunk locations to get some quality crab. Val noted that there are some good, ocean running crab entering the river now and they are of good size.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Unless you know the ins and outs of the limited coho fishery on the lower Columbia, it is best to stick to sturgeon this weekend. Diversify your baits to draw the best opportunities and plan on moving around until you find the desired action. Shakers are not a problem to find but keeper action is pretty localized and only experience will tell you where they are under certain water conditions. Action will likely begin to wane as water temperatures drop which is happening rapidly on the mainstem.

Steelheaders should prepare themselves for a productive fall fishery in the John Day area. Action here should be on the increase as migration slows in the cooling temperatures and larger "B" run fish begin to make an appearance. Trollers working a variety of colors in wiggle warts and hot shots should take fish just above the John Day Dam and for those experienced in running the mainstem John Day, action should be good in the lower 8 miles of the river using bobbers and jigs or bait, specifically shrimp. The fish in the John Day however average smaller than the mainstem Columbia steelhead.

What a great weekend for a crabbing outing on the lower Columbia. Tides are ripe for a good take with a soft early morning high tide for those motivated to begin early. Break out the freshest bait available and get yourselves down to buoy 22 or 20. A limit of crab should be an easy feat.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Good numbers of shakers are

being taken on the lower Willamette but, unlike a couple of weeks ago, most fishers in a good spot are taking home a keeper or two. The stretch of the river below Freemont Bridge has been most productive. Sturgeon fishing will further improve as the Columbia cools and the fish seek the (Comparatively) warmer water of the lower Willamette. Multnomah Channel has been slow and has been producing only sturgeon too small to keep.

Expect the level and flow of the North Santiam to continue fluctuating for a while. Overall, the level is up and the water is moving at a brisk pace.

The McKenzie River and tributaries above Blue River closed to fishing at the end of October.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Sand shrimp has been hands-down the sturgeon-getting bait on the lower Willamette. The sturgeon are still biting very lightly so watch the rod tip vigilantly. Fly anglers are taking some nice rainbows in the upper Willamette near Albany.

Try North Santiam State Park below the mouth of the Stillwater for steelhead. The North Santiam River slows in this stretch to offer the best opportunity for a hookup.

The McKenzie below Blue River will provide decent trout fishing until the fall rain begins in earnest or there's a hard freeze. Fly anglers will see primarily Blue-winged olives hatching in late fall.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – While few are pursuing them, summer steelheading is fair to good on the Clackamas from McIver to Barton Park. Coho are scattered throughout the system with the better catches coming from above Barton Park. Fishing was fair on Eagle Creek over the weekend but the water is getting low.

Coho fishing on the Sandy has been slow with Cedar Creek and just below the mouth offering the only respite from muddy water. Cured salmon eggs remain most effective and while there's very little pressure, very few fish are being caught.

Look for early winter steelhead on the Clackamas and Sandy rivers towards the end of November.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Despite the good tide series we are just getting done with, coupled with the fact it is the end of October, fishing on Tillamook Bay this week was pretty much a bust. Historically, this time of year, the run is about peaking with great numbers of Wilson and Kilchis fish beginning to show in the catches. This secondary run of fish seems to be absent with many of us scratching our heads wondering if they are going to show at all. Although it is too early to get too alarmed, we all had higher expectations for better catches this week. We have to keep in mind a significant rain freshet just took place and numerous Wilson and Kilchis fish took to their natal rivers last week leaving the bay a bit scarce for left-overs. Now that we are experiencing some softer hold-over tides on the morning outgoing, it gives us a perfect double-day opportunity for a low slack bite at the jaws and a strong incoming tide opportunity in the middle bay for fish destined for the Wilson and Kilchis tidewaters. Last year, almost to the day, this scenario paid large dividends to anglers that were dialed in with multiple opportunities for a day of fishing. Clearly not the case this year. On Wednesday, 10/31, there was a short bite at the jaws near low slack with over 30 boats participating. Maybe 10 to 12 fish were caught. First light produced a few fish in the west channel but the bite waned shortly after that. We caught only 1 fish near low slack in the Ghost Hole and I saw just one other caught. One of the slowest days of the season that I have seen so far.

The upper bay has produced very poorly the last few days but late last week, there was a fair spinner bite at the Oyster House Hole, near the mouth of the Wilson and along the picket fence. These upper bay flurries are likely to slow down as fish now entering the bay are more likely to cross Kilchis Flats and enter the Kilchis and Wilson Rivers. The Trask and Wilson tidewaters have also produced poor results since the last rain freshet. There are clearly not a lot of fish entering Tillamook Bay right now but I keep telling my customers, that is due to change!

Although it's been exclusively a herring show for me, spinners were responsible for a few fish at Bay City on Monday and Wednesday. The red/white blades seem to be producing most consistently lately but the chartreuse/green dot and half brass/half orange with the blue dot is also taking some fish when the sun hits the water.

So, you'd think the ocean was the place to be? If I didn't have other guides reporting the results out there, I would think that too. The ocean conditions have been unseasonably awesome for this time of year with an east wind knocking down the swell by tide change. Unfortunately, the bite has been less than impressive. An early morning bite doesn't last long and when the few biters are culled at first light, it's a long wait until high tide when another batch of fish fall to the remaining anglers sticking it out. One huge benefit is the lack of seaweed that allows you to fish for long periods of time knowing that you have a chance at a fish. As the softer tides came into play more recently, seaweed hasn't been such a factor but it was horrendous most of the weekend and early part of this week. The fish just were not there!

On the Nehalem, well, all the regular guides are now fishing Tillamook Bay if that is any indication as to what is going on over there. Most anglers have simply written off Nehalem Bay this year.

Further south, the Nestucca fished real well after the rain and **pro guide Kent Anderson (503-550-6303)** reports, "Nestucca has a few fresh fish but is in desperate need of rain water. A couple holes are holding quite a few fish but if you are not in one of those holes it is just a boat ride. Tidewater is empty of fish, they all headed upriver with the rain a week ago. I am hoping for the main run to be late like the past couple of years. It was nice to fish for a few days in a T shirt and sunglasses!! The attached pix is a 27# hen caught by Michael Hodge on 10/27. My camera batteries died so I didn't get pix of the other fish. (In the 3 days with Michael we landed 2 and had a few other "bobber-downs")



Crabbing remains poor in Tillamook Bay, fair to good in Netarts and Nestucca estuaries.

**The Guide's Forecast** – This should be a tell-tale week for Tillamook Bay. Most of us refuse to believe the run is over- especially given the fact of how good it was last year clear into December! I think we simply lost what would have been this weeks fish to the rain freshet last week. There were clearly a lot of fish that went into these coastal tributaries on the last rain. The tides are ideal for lower bay trollers this week with the jetty likely to get most of the attention. It'll be a weak outgoing tide for most of the morning tide allowing anglers to hover at the mouth and maybe continue to fish the ocean for most of the week. The west (or some call it the south) channel may continue to produce fish also and it does best at the beginning of outgoing tide and late into the incoming. No matter where you fish, keep your herring spinning tight very near the bottom of the bay. It'll be a herring show this week but spinners may be responsible for some fish at Bay City and the top end of the west channel.

No rain in sight making for another lonely week on the area rivers. Tides will likely be too weak for productive bobber fishing but the Wilson remains the best bet if there are biters to be had. Locals are stating it's one of the worst bobber years that they have witnessed in quite some time. In theory, the best is yet to come on the Wilson and Kilchis Rivers. Stay tuned!

Commercial ocean trollers will be competing with sport anglers this month as they will fish in the bubble from November 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>. Their catch has not been a significant factor in the reduction of

sport catch however and it will likely not impact catch rates for the sport fleet.

If you are going to crab, choose Netarts of Nestucca bay but the overall best bet is the lower Columbia River.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Rain changed everything when it fell in buckets. Now dry weather is changing everything back. It's tough to knock the beautiful, sunny autumn days we're experiencing, but most rivers and the fish which inhabit them would benefit from rain.

Siletz anglers are struggling to take a few Chinook with the better odds in the stretch from the town of Siletz to the top of tidewater.

Bottom fishing has been excellent a short run outside of Yaquina Bay when ocean conditions allow. Crabbing is slow inside the bay as is the Chinook fishing in the Yaquina River.

Chinook fishing has been slow on the Alsea but backbouncers are picking up the occasional fish on high-quality cured salmon eggs.

Chinook fishing has been slow on the Alsea although a few are being taken just above tidewater.

A few Chinook are being taken daily by trollers using plug-cut herring on the Siuslaw.

The wild coho fishery at Siltcoos and Tahkenitch is off to a slow start. Trolled spinners is the primary method practiced here.

Drift boaters are dragging their craft through shallow stretches to take a few Chinook out of the low water of the Sixes River.

Steelheading on the North Umpqua has been slow all season with low run numbers. It's about over now as steelhead are heading up tributaries where fishing is not allowed. Crabbing has been slow to fair in Winchester Bay.

Coos Bay has been delivering limits of Dungeness with crabbing expected to get even better into November. Both numbers and size of crab will improve.

Bait will be allowed on the Rogue in addition to lures and flies for steelhead in the stretch from Coles River Hatchery to Shady Cove boat ramp as of November 1st. Only artificial lures are allowed from the Shady Cove ramp to Gold Ray. Steelheading has been fair with the run numbers 70% of average.

Chinook anglers are scoring fish in very low water conditions on the Chetco as fresh salmon continue to enter the estuary despite these conditions. Trollers are hooking a few in tidewater on plug-cut herring. The next round of precipitation and this river should be red hot. The run has just started here and will continue to reward through November.

**Pr guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411)** reports that he "went bottomfishing out of Depoe Bay on Monday. The ocean was a little bouncier than predicted but we did manage to limit out on ling cod. Also caught several cabazon which we released. We were fishing off the Siletz and Lincoln City. The fish checker was waiting for us at the ramp. He said we were the first non charter boat he had checked in two weeks. He also said the fishing cleaning station is closed as some kids put rocks in the grinder and turned it on. Just hoping for some rain so I can float the Alsea for some late run chinook."

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – The Deschutes is murky with White River contributing to the low visibility, Steelheading seems to have come to a halt with the fish traveling several miles a day and moving through the areas they would normally hold. Boats trolling Wiggle Warts at the mouth of the Deschutes have seen some larger steelhead turn up in catches over the past week. Fishing for reddsides is fair with October Cadisses hatching now. Nymphing has also produced good catches of trout. The Deschutes is now closed to trout fishing from the north end of Warm Springs to Pelton Dam.

The Grande Ronde is dropping and currently the flow is less than 1,000 cfs. Steelheading remains fair although anglers are having to put in some hours in order to take a fish.

Trollers geared up with downriggers are taking Mackinaw at Crescent Lake from depths over 100 feet. Browns to 20 inches are being caught in shallow water at first light but the bite shuts down when the sun is on the water.

**Pro guide Rick Arnold (541-480-1570)** reports, "On the home front, I got word from a buddy in Cal. that Paulina Lake produced browns to 4 Lb. the last week in Oct. on his last trip of the season."

"Not much else going on with most of the attention on hunting right now."

**Northwest Trout** – Henry Hagg Lake has been producing fair to good catches of hatchery trout to trollers. Bank fishing is challenging as the water level is drawn down in anticipation of fall and winter precipitation, so it's mostly mud above the water line. While Hagg Lake used to close at the end of October, it is now open through the weekend before Thanksgiving and should remain productive.

Trout fishing closed at the end of October in streams, tidewater and bays. Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake, both of which are in the Salem area, are scheduled to be planted with legal-sized and larger trout.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

#### **From the WDF&W Weekender Report **October 31<sup>st</sup> – November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007****

##### **North Puget Sound**

Anglers fishing for **coho salmon** in the region's rivers and streams are still finding some silvers, but **chum** will soon be taking center stage. Meanwhile, some anglers on the saltwater have been reeling in **blackmouth** and will soon have the option of also dropping a pot, as the **crab** fishery re-opens in select areas in November.

Starting Nov. 1 at sunrise, marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) will reopen for **sport crabbing** seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2008. Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Two other marine areas – 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan

and Port Gardner) – will reopen for crab fishing on a daily basis Nov. 22-25 during the Thanksgiving holiday. The late season in those areas is limited to four days, because annual catch quotas for those areas were nearly reached during the summer season, said Rich Childers, WDFW crab policy coordinator.

Sport crabbing will not reopen this year in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), where the summer catch slightly exceeded the annual quota.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

While on the Sound, why not fish for **blackmouth**? Effort has been low, but recent creel checks in the region indicate decent fishing for blackmouth – resident chinook – in Marine Area 10. At Shilshole Ramp, 30 anglers were checked with a total of 18 chinook Oct. 27, while 34 anglers brought home 10 chinook the following day. Anglers in marine area 10 are allowed to keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit.

Beginning Nov. 1, opportunities for blackmouth will increase, as marine areas 8-1, 8-2 and 9 open for chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 9 will be allowed to keep one chinook as part of two-salmon daily limit for that area. Those fishing in marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 will have a two-salmon daily limit and can keep up to two hatchery chinook per day. Wild chinook salmon, which have an intact adipose fin, cannot be brought aboard the boat in areas 8-1 and 8-2.

Anglers are reminded that Marine Area 7 closes to salmon retention Nov. 1. In the rivers, the coho season is winding down and chum salmon will soon be showing up. "We're in a transition period," said Chad Jackson, WDFW fish biologist. "I'm sure river anglers are still finding some coho, but we should start to see more and more chum in the coming weeks."

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

### **South Sound/Olympic Peninsula**

While **chum** season is taking off throughout Puget Sound, anglers can troll area rivers for **coho** or take advantage of the late-season recreational **crab** season.

Starting Nov. 1, recreational crab fishing will reopen in five marine areas of Puget Sound, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). Crab fishing in those areas will be open seven days a week through Jan. 2.

Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Those fishing for crab in Puget Sound this fall and winter are required to fill out a winter catch card to record their catch. These winter cards are valid until Jan. 2 and due to WDFW by Jan. 15, 2008. Crabbers can mail in their cards or report their catch on the WDFW website, which will be available Jan. 2, 2008.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition

with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

Meanwhile, anglers fishing the waters near Hoodport in Hood Canal are starting to reel in some of the nearly 600,000 returning wild and hatchery **chum**. Over the Oct. 27 weekend, 37 anglers caught 25 chum near Hoodport. Also, starting Nov. 1, anglers will have more opportunity to target chum in area streams when the Dosewallips and Duckabush Rivers in Jefferson County, and Minter Creek in Pierce/Kitsap counties open for fishing.

For those in search of **blackmouth**, a new non-selective fishery opens Nov. 1- 30 in Marine Area 5 off Sekiu, where the daily limit is two salmon (combined) and one chinook may be retained. The one-chinook retention rule also applies in marine areas 11 and 13 starting Nov. 1, when the single-point barbless hook restriction will be lifted in Marine Area 13.

Anglers planning to fish for **coho salmon** in the Grays Harbor area should be aware that the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet erroneously shows several rivers closing early. As stated in the errata sheet on the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>), the fishery for coho salmon will continue through November on the Chehalis river, and anglers may retain wild coho on the Elk, Hoquiam, Johns, Satsop Wishkah, and Wynoochee rivers, as well as Joe Creek. Anglers also may retain wild coho on the Newaukum and Skookumchuck rivers through Nov. 30.

"The pamphlet had already been distributed by the time we caught these errors," said Ron Warren, regional WDFW fish program manager. "We notified the news media and posted the errata on the website, but we want to flag the correction again for salmon anglers who want to continue fishing those rivers."

Coho fishing was "spotty" on many – but not all – of those rivers through October, said Scott Barbour, a WDFW biologist. During the last Saturday of the month, anglers aboard 30 boats pulled in 37 coho and one chinook fishing the Chehalis River near Fuller Bridge. Fishing has been even better where the Johns River flows into Grays Harbor, he said.

Anglers fishing the Quillayute river system on the Olympic Peninsula can retain two wild coho as of Nov. 1, but both hatchery and wild coho have been scarce so far, said Brian Russell, Sol Duc hatchery manager. "It's similar to last year's late show when we didn't get hatchery returns until the second week in November," Russell said. In addition, the numbers were lower than usual. "We typically get about 17,000 returning coho, but in 2006 the number dropped to 5,000," he said. "Hopefully the returns will be better this year." On the positive side, more jacks are showing up in recent weeks. "That's encouraging," he said.

Meanwhile, anglers looking for some late-season **trout** fishing, should head to Black Lake in Thurston County, where 3,500 one-pound rainbows are being planted this week and in preparation for the Nov. 3 weekend.

Trout anglers headed to Mason County should note that the WDFW boat launch on Lake Kokanee, will not be available for two weeks starting Nov. 5. The lake, which is maintained by Tacoma Power, is being lowered for maintenance at the Cushman Dam.

About 20,000 **razor clam** diggers took home their 15-clam limit during the season opener at four ocean beaches Oct. 25-29. The next weekend dig is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 23-26, subject to the results of marine toxin tests.

### **Southwest Washington:**

The bite has dropped off a bit for **sturgeon**, but **hatchery coho** have been coming on strong from the North Fork Lewis River to the mouth of the Klickitat River. At both of those locations, boat anglers averaged about one coho per rod during the last week of October.

"This is prime time for hatchery **late-stock coho**," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist in the Vancouver office. "The conditions are right, the fish are moving into the tributaries and anglers are catching some nice, bright fish."

Some of the best fishing was near the salmon hatchery on the North Fork Lewis, where 42 boat anglers checked had 42 hatchery silvers and reported releasing 11 wild fish and 24 chinook. Ninety-six bank anglers took home 16 more hatchery fish from the Lewis River.

Boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool at the mouth of the Klickitat River also did well. "Those fish are clearly staging at the mouth of the Klickitat, and should start moving into the river soon," Hymer said.

No creel checks were conducted on the Cowlitz River during the last week of October, but lots of fish have been showing up at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. Tacoma Power employees released 885 coho adults into Riffe Lake at the Taidnapam North boat launch; 400 coho adults into Lake Scanewa at the Day Use Site; 152 coho adults into the Cispus River above the mouth of Yellow Jacket Creek; 150 coho adults into the upper Cowlitz River at the Skate Creek Bridge in Packwood; and 46 coho adults and 39 **fall chinook** adults into the Tilton River at Gust Backstrom Park in Morton that week.

The first hatchery **steelhead** of the season arrived at Kalama Falls Hatchery the last week of October, with more expected to follow, Hymer said. He noted that the daily limit for hatchery steelhead on the Cowlitz River reverts to two fish (from four) on Nov. 1.

Cooling water has slowed the **sturgeon** catch below Bonneville Dam, where 305 bank anglers checked 35 legal-size fish during the last full week of October. That's about one fish for every 8.7 rods, roughly the same odds as for boat anglers. In mid-October, bank anglers averaged about one legal-size fish for every three rods.

Mike Wall, with the WDFW Sturgeon Project, said the wind may also have something to do with the lower catch rate. "Veterans of the fishery say a west wind is best, an east wind catches the least," Wall said. "There's been an east wind blowing lately."

**Walleye** fishing has also slowed in the Camas/Washougal area, but Silver Lake near Castle Rock has been very good for **crappie** and **trout** fishers have several good options. Rowland and Spearfish lakes have both been producing some nice rainbows, and WDFW recently stocked Battle Ground Lake with 1,055 rainbows weighing from 1.8 pounds apiece and larger.

### **Eastern Washington:**

Snake River hatchery **steelhead** fishing continues to improve as air and water temperatures drop. Latest creel surveys show the best catch rate is in the mid-Snake River, above the interstate bridge near Clarkston, where anglers are averaging about five hours of effort per steelhead caught. Steelheaders in that stretch need to be careful about drifting into the Clearwater River across the state line into Idaho, and continuing to fish without an Idaho license. No part of the Clearwater River can be legally fished with a Washington license only.

Other stretches of the Snake River are yielding steelhead at slower but steady rates. From Little Goose to Lower Granite dams, steelheaders have been averaging about 12 hours of effort per

fish. The Wallula area, from the Oregon state line to the mouth of the Walla Walla River, has seen about 13 hours of angling per steelhead. For the complete creel survey summary, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/snake/index.htm>.

**Rainbow trout** fishing on Lake Roosevelt has been outstanding for the last few weeks, according to Jeff Lombard, WDFW Spokane Fish Hatchery specialist. "With the water cooling down, the fish are hitting and limits of one-and-a-half to three-pound rainbows are the norm," he said. The best fishing has been down river from the Seven Bays area, near Whitestone and Lincoln.

Many fishing lakes are closed in the region, but WDFW Regional Access Manager Scott Young said there are some areas with public access sites that remain open. Waitts Lake, four miles west of Valley along Highway 395 in Stevens County, is open through February and produces nice rainbow and **brown trout**. Eloika Lake, seven miles north of Chattaroy off Highway 2 in Spokane County, is open year-round and has decent **largemouth bass, perch** and **crappie** fishing. Newman Lake, near the Idaho border in eastern Spokane County, is open year-round with largemouth bass, **bluegill**, crappie, **perch, catfish**, plus some rainbow, brown and **eastern brook trout**, and **tiger muskies**. Silver Lake, a mile east of the town of Medical Lake in southwest Spokane County, is open year-round and also has a little bit of everything, including **tiger trout** and tiger muskies. Rock Lake, a mile north of Ewan in Whitman County, is open year-round and is now providing good action on brown trout.

Portions of some rivers in the region also remain open year-round for fishing. The Pend Oreille River, which has net-pen-reared rainbow trout, plus some brown trout, crappie, perch and bass, is open year-round and WDFW maintains a primitive access site near Ruby Creek, about 15 miles south of Ione. The uppermost portion of the Spokane River, from Upriver Dam to the Idaho border, is catch-and-release only through March 15. The rest of the river is open year-round, but check the rules pamphlet for catch limits and other regulations.

The **whitefish** season opens Nov. 1 on the Kettle River in Ferry and Stevens counties. Fishing gear is restricted to one single point hook, maximum hook size 3/16 inch point to shank (hook size 14). Catch limit is 15 whitefish.

#### **North Central Washington:**

On Oct. 22, for the first time in 10 years, the Wenatchee River opened to **steelhead** fishing, and as WDFW district fish biologist Art Viola of Cashmere said, "fishermen were overjoyed." Some 175 anglers were checked on the opener and almost half caught fish, Viola said. The average catch rate was about 4.8 hours of angling per fish. Forty percent of all the steelhead caught were adipose fin clipped and kept; the 60 percent with unclipped adipose fins were released.

"Crowds have thinned since the opening day, with only about 35 to 40 anglers on the river each day last weekend," Viola said. "The average catch rate has fallen to about a fish for every 10 hours of effort, but it's still good fishing. The river remains lower than normal, water clarity is good and water temperatures have fallen into the high to mid-forties – excellent water temperatures for steelhead fishing."

Viola said the Wenatchee River steelhead season, which runs through March 31 from the mouth upstream to Icicle Road Bridge west of Leavenworth, is not only a special opportunity to catch steelhead, but also a way for anglers to assist in wild steelhead recovery efforts. "Removing some of the hatchery steelhead in excess of spawning escapement needs will allow more spawning and rearing habitat for wild fish and thus increase natural production," he explained.

WDFW district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Omak reports that steelhead fishing has slowed a bit in

recent weeks on the upper Columbia River system, where anglers were averaging a fish every 10-12 hours of effort. "On the Methow River, stonefly nymphs with an egg pattern trailer are popular," he said. "On the Okanogan River, anglers are using mostly spoons and jig and bobber combinations. The mainstem Columbia near the docks in Pateros continues to produce fish for anglers using a jig and bobber setup tipped with a whole shrimp."

Jateff reminds anglers that bait is only allowed within the mainstem Columbia and that the Methow and Okanogan Rivers are under selective gear rules with no bait allowed. Fishermen can retain their daily limit of two adipose-fin-clipped steelhead, but any fish with intact adipose fins must be released immediately and not taken out of the water.

The Similkameen River will open to steelhead fishing Nov. 15. The open section will be from the mouth to the Railroad Trestle Bridge, which is one mile upstream of the Highway 7 Bridge in Oroville. Selective gear rules apply on the Similkameen River for the duration of the steelhead fishery. "There seems to be some confusion among anglers about these rules, so I encourage them to check out the emergency rule change on all the upper Columbia tributaries on our website," he said. (See <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.)

Jateff also noted that while most lowland **rainbow trout** lakes in Okanogan County closed to fishing Oct. 31, year round waters continue to provide good fishing opportunities. Little Twin near Winthrop, Big and Little Green near Omak, and Rat near Brewster all have split seasons, providing catch-and-release fishing with selective gear rules now, and then catch-and-keep fishing with standard gear starting Dec. 1.

WDFW district fish biologist Jeff Korth of Moses Lake reports that rainbow trout fishing at Dry Falls Lake in Grant County has been very good. "Spring fingerlings stocked there have already reached 12 inches," he said, noting that "there are plenty of 15 to 18-inchers, and more than the occasional fish runs up to 20 inches."

Korth also suggests fishing Lake Lenore, which has **cutthroat** averaging two to three pounds and up to five or six pounds. Dry Falls Lake and Lake Lenore, along with the other selective gear fisheries Lenice, Nunnally, and Dusty lakes, are open through the end of November.

"**Walleye** numbers in Potholes Reservoir and Moses Lake are up," Korth said, "and these fish become more active with fall and cooler water temperatures. Most fish range in size from 15 to 24 inches." Anglers at these big year-round waters in the Columbia Basin can harvest eight fish daily with a minimum size of 12 inches and only one fish over 22 inches.

#### **South Central Washington:**

The fishery for **hatchery steelhead** in the Ringold area of the Columbia River has been slow, but is likely to get a lot better starting Nov. 1, said Paul Hoffarth, WDFW fish biologist. That's because, starting Nov. 1, anglers will be able to keep any hatchery steelhead with a clipped adipose fin, as opposed to those with both a clipped adipose fin and a clipped right ventral fin.

"The dual clippings identify fish reared in the Ringold Hatchery," Hoffarth said. "Until Nov. 1, we target those fish exclusively to make sure we get enough fish above Priest Rapids Dam to meet escapement goals."

The problem this year is that returns to the Ringold Hatchery have been relatively low, Hoffarth said. "But there's lots of other hatchery steelhead with adipose clips in the river that anglers will be able to catch and keep."

The fishery is open through March 31, 2008 from the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco/Kennewick

upstream to the wooden powerline towers at the old Hanford town site.

Meanwhile, WDFW fish biologist Eric Anderson of Yakima reminds **rainbow trout** anglers that many catchable-size trout were recently stocked in Yakima and Kittitas county year-round lakes. "Although these fish are smaller than our spring planted trout, they still provide good angling opportunity in our year-round lakes," Anderson said. "Some of these fish carry over through the winter to a larger size in the lake without tying up valuable rearing space in the hatchery."

#### **Reader Email -**

Bob F. wrote via the contact form at the TGF website, "I think Bob has made a fairly large mistake in his Oregonian article. About two weeks ago the ODFW announced in the Oregonian that all clamming on the north Oregon beaches is closed due to Toxins and I have not seen anywhere that ban has been lifted. You might want to check this out as he encourages taking advantage of the tides on Clatsop County beaches."

TGF co-editor Michael Teague was aware of this particular situation and replied, "The ban was still in effect on Wednesday, October 24th but was lifted by Thursday, October 25th which is both the day we write TGF and the date of publication ([http://oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/shellfish\\_status.shtml](http://oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/shellfish_status.shtml)). We do it this way so the content is as fresh as possible.

"Thanks for writing. We value any and all input."

What does a fishing guide do on vacation? Goes fishing, of course!

**Pro guide Rick Arnold (541-480-1570)** writes, 'Just got in from the Canada trip last night. Great trip but no monsters. Here is an update for you.

"Our first trip to Kootenay Lake, BC was great! My buddy, John Werwie, caught rainbows of 11, 10.5, 7, and 5 LBS. This is a lake that can produce 20 LB. rainbows to keep it in perspective.

Thanks for the update, Rick!

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

Write to the TGF staff:

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#### **Random Links**

The fisherman's vade mecum - Tips for beginner fly fishers:

**<http://www.ultimateflytying.com/VadeMecum.htm>**

**Weekly Quote** – "I have learned not to go crazy if I hike for a while only to find someone in my private water." - Steven J. Meyers

**GOOD LUCK!**